

THE
WORKS
OF
Dr Edward Young.

VOL. IV.

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T H E
W O R K S

OF THE REVEREND

Dr Edward Young.

I N

FOUR VOLUMES.

Carefully Compared and Corrected by the Author's Editions.

VOLUME the FOURTH.

L O N D O N :

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THE
CENTAUR
NOT
FABULOUS.
IN
SIX LETTERS to a FRIEND,
ON THE
LIFE IN VOGUE.

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L A D Y

MADAM,

YOUR Ladyship's character is so well known, that the public would blame me, if I presented not these papers to You, who can so readily put them into the hands of those who want them most.

You will, probably, ask, why the CENTAUR is prefix'd as a title to them? The men of pleasuré, the licentious, and profligate, are the subject of these letters; and in such, as in the fabled Centaur, the brute runs away with the man: therefore I call them *Centaurs*. And farther, I call them *Centaurs* not *Fabulous*, because by their scarce half-human conduct, and character, that enigmatical and purely ideal figure of the ancients, is not unriddled only, but realized.

Your Ladyship's curiosity is great; and you, possibly, are willing to know what account Antiquity gives of the family, or rather breed, of the Centaurs. It is as follows:

Of the Centaurs the most celebrated was CHIRON. He was a great botanist; and our bitter herb Centory takes its name from him. He thought all herbs bitter, because, being very amorous, he could not find any amongst them, that could abate the fever in his blood: and he left a complaint in the

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Greek language to that purpose; which Ovid, sick of the same disease, has translated, and transmitted to posterity in his works.

But he was not only a botanist, but a great master of music: he composed an exquisite piece of harmony for young Achilles his pupil, which charm'd Deidamia to his embraces; by whom he had Pyrrhus, in the court of her father Nicomedes, a little before he dropped his petticoats, and put on his boots for the Trojan war. But what will endear to your Ladyship Chiron's memory beyond any the most renowned in story, is, that he was not only the venerable father of Operas, but was also the son of a Masquerade; the very first of those numerous sons, with which that prolific entertainment has since multiplied mankind.

It happened thus: Saturn, false to his good wife Ops, had an intrigue with Philyra. Seeing, one day, his injured spouse coming to disturb their intimacy, for escape, he turned himself into an HORSE; which occasioned the noble equestrian figure of Chiron, his son.

This, Madam, was the very first of masquerades. You see the virtuous occasion, and the laudable fruits of it. Jupiter's masquerading in the form of a BULL, was long after. Europe takes its name from EUROPA, with whom he ran away in that shape. And your friend Clodius says, that, probably, we celebrate HORNED MASQUERADES in memory of it. This is the recorded origin of that nocturnal assembly; and, indeed, it is evident to common sense, that the Masquerade had

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never existed, but for its then accidental, and since established subserviency to love.

These, you will say, are wild fables; but they are not without their morals. This fable of Saturn and Ops, means, that jealous CONSCIENCE, the soul's lawful wife, will ever disturb licentious pleasure; and that there is no means of escaping the persecution, but by becoming quite brutal in it. This, and the following explanations of the mystical part of antiquity, have been overlooked by former commentators, though BACON was among them.

There is a second moral in the present fable. Chiron, Madam, was a man, as much, I mean, as the gayer part of your acquaintance. Why then is he represented as a Centaur? For two reasons. He was, as I have said before, the son of Saturn, and a very lewd old fellow. Representing him as a Centaur, signifies, that beings of origin truly celestial, may debase their nature, forfeit their character, and sink themselves, by licentiousness, into perfect beasts.

Secondly, it signifies, that the rest of the species, the sober part of mankind, prejudiced by the abandoned manners of such men, may naturally imagine, that they hear them neighing after their wives and daughters: galloping with more than human haste after temptations; and, therefore, rather insolently prancing on four legs, than decently content with two. This, probably, is the meaning: first, because prejudice greatly hurts our discernment, and transforms objects exceedingly.

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Secondly, because all allow that a Centaur is a mere creature of the imagination.

But though Chiron was the most celebrated, yet he was not the most ancient of our mythological cavalry. Ixion was a primitive man of pleasure; a gallant of Juno, and much in favour. Jupiter, less in his interest, interposed a cloud in her stead, which not long after was brought to bed of the first Centaurs. From that hour Juno commenced a scold; and in that character Virgil makes her swear, that if she can't find friends in heaven, she will ransack hell for them.

The amour of Ixion imports, the great height of our expectation, and as great depth of our disappointment, in illicit love: and Jupiter interposing the cloud, intimates, that Heaven decrees this disappointment; and that therefore it is madness to flatter ourselves with hopes of the contrary. The fable would farther teach us, that our imagination, fired by passion, imposes not only on our understandings, but our very senses, which take clouds for goddesses; and adore darkness, as divine.

You see, Madam, that gallantry is hereditary in this illustrious House, I should say STABLE: that, therefore, continence may be construed as an argument of bastardy. Who then can blame your gay friends for being loth to be bastardized, and disinherited; to lose honour, patrimony, and mistresses, together?

They keep clear of this imputation: but there is one particular, that speaks not so much in their favour; but rather calls their legitimacy in question.

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How comes it to pass, that the posterity of cloud-begotten fires should be so cloudless a generation, that not one spot of stupidity can be found about them?

But though spotless in this point, they are not so in another; which may set all right again. Deianira, as a charm to regain the love of her husband Hercules, who was gone astray after Omphale, Queen of Lydia, sent him a shirt dipped in the blood of the Centaur Nessus. But instead of answering her honest end, it gave him a distemper so virulent, that it proved mortal. To balance the disadvantage above, some say, this distemper, at certain seasons, still runs in his race. Others rob our modern Centaurs of that credit; imputing their disorder to another cause. And, indeed, the present story tells us, that ladies may convey somewhat else, when they mean only to make a present of their love.

But worse than distemper is to be feared. You know, Madam, Ixion's remarkable punishment; but, probably, not the full import of it. Jupiter, for the father's sake, detesting his whole posterity, designed Ixion's wheel, not only as an emblem of their endless rotation in unaltered circles of present pleasures; but also, as a prophecy of their future pains; and an exact representation of that rack, which Prudes say, they deserve for their family-seats.

And now, Madam, all things considered, have I named them wrong? I have named them, as most men of ancient renown were, from their personal qualities, and exploits. If you still think me to

blame, I flatter myself you will change your mind, when you have read the letters following.

This address to your Ladyship, will my sober readers say, is itself a Centaur, of the Pegasean kind, in which the untamed imagination has too much run away with the judgment, and carried it to enormous heights. If your Ladyship will venture, however, to be my fellow-traveller, I promise to carry you safely to an eminence in Fairy-land, from whence you shall survey the most surprising and amusing scene. To comply with your taste, it shall even be a ludicrous one. Your favourite Centaurs shall be permitted to intrude even into the most solemn groves of sacred meditation. Their grotesque figures shall continually meet your eye, where you the least expect, and where the severe critic and the prude (all but Centaurettes are Prudes with you) will be most scandalized to find them.

As a pledge of this promise, accept of my Frontispiece. It offers a sketch which your Ladyship, who know our Centaur's secret accomplishments better than I do, may employ a better hand to perfect.

The statutes of the renowned are set up in public, to kindle honest emulation. In most ancient schools of wisdom were the busts or portraits of the wise. What, Madam, if, for your modern academy, Hogarth should draw a Centaur, not, as usual, with his bow and arrow, but (what will hit my mark as well), with Harlequin's sabre by his side; in a party-coloured jacket of pictured cards, a band of

music before, a fear-grouch-demon behind him; a weathercock on his head, a rattle in his hand, the detraque under his feet; and, for the benefit of your scholars, a label out of his mouth, inscribed, as was the temple of Apollo, with *Εἰς ἑαυτὸν*, in letters of gold, [*In ME, know thyself;*] they, your scholars, will take it in the true philosophic sense, and wonder how it came into the mouth of so ridiculous, and, to them, so foreign a monster.

As your Ladyship's assembly, of all our hyppodromes, is the most renowned, I hope you will favourably accept the wholesome provender I send you. It is of an anti-circean nature; and may, possibly, turn your monsters into men.

But I detain you: it is SUNDAY NIGHT; and I hear a whole string of your high-bred, unbridled colts coming in full career; with a blaze in their foreheads, to outbrazen my rebukes; and a spring in their heels, to bound high at your balls.

"*Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.*"

This, Madam, you understand better than they. But you begin to frown, as you always do at praise. Fear not; not one word of compliment shall you have from me during our whole journey. I shall carry you at first a heavy trot through rough unbeaten ways, entertaining you unpolitely, with discourse quite foreign to your way of thinking; such as passed in correspondence between me and a friend that would equally despise and be despised among such as you think yours. In the progress of our travels (which I must honestly tell you, will only touch upon, not terminate in Fairy-land) I shall carry you into an unknown country, where

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every thing is real, bright, and transporting. If there, compelled by the force of sovereign truth, I should not only assert, but convincingly prove, that you are of rank more than imperial, and present you with an unflattering glass, in which, notwithstanding, your own form shall appear with all the charms of an angel——But some breathing-time is necessary to prepare for such an arduous expedition. Therefore, I dismount for the present, and say no more.

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LETTER I.

ON

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L E T T E R I.

DEAR SIR,

MAKE no apology for your request; the world is your apology. The occasion calls louder on me, than my friend can possibly do; and robs me of the credit of having my compliance owing entirely to your desire. Alarmed at our reigning passion for PLEASURE, you press me to write on that subject. Who can forbear? since, if the present canine appetite for it should increase, where is that Bedlam which can receive a whole nation into proper methods of cure?

Your enjoining me one task has engaged me in two. Prevails not INFIDELITY as much as Pleasure? And for ever they must prevail, or decrease, together. Infidelity is the parent of the love of pleasure in some; Eve doubted, and then ate: it is the consequence of it in others; most of Eve's daughters first taste, and then disbelieve. Pleasure, and Infidelity, reciprocally generate each other; and that necessarily; for faith is entirely the result of reason, and reason is impotent in proportion to the prevalence of sense; therefore sensual pleasure begets infidelity. On the reverse, he that disbelieves a futurity, must be fond of the present, and eagerly swallow its unrivalled delights; and therefore, Infidelity lets loose the rein to Pleasure, and gives it an ample range: he then, who would reduce one, must strike at both. Eve, and the serpent, fell together; Pleasure, like the first, plucks the forbidden fruit; and Infidelity says, with the latter, "Thou shalt not surely die."

These two, now national distempers, fairly divide us between them. One seizes the body; one the mind: and where these two fiery darts have taken place, the Destroyer may spare a third; his work is done. What then must be mine? The task is hard to extract them; for they seem, at present, to be not only poisoned, but barbed, arrows, in the British heart.

However, I shall attempt, first, to make the Infidel, and then the Voluptuary, sensible of his error. I shall recommend belief and virtue, in the room of doubt and dissoluteness; and by (I hope) properly adapted devotion, assist their repentance; that necessary step of transition from one of these states to the other. And considering into whose hands these Letters will first come, (for I design them for the press), with regard to yourself, I shall give you your friend Eusebius's character at large. And with regard to your sister, I shall invite her, and her gay favourites, to a funeral, instead of a ball; and, then, I shall enter on subjects not unimportant, nor foreign to these.

As the mind is our superior part, I shall first speak of INFIDELITY, and then of PLEASURE. And it shall be my endeavour so to speak of both, as to render it the province of Wit, rather than Wisdom, to reply. What may silence Wisdom, will but provoke Wit, whose ambition it is to say most where least is to be said. You may as well attempt to silence an echo by strength of voice, as a wit by the force of reason. They both are but the louder for it: they both will have the last word. How often hear we men with great ingenuity supporting folly? that is, by wit destroying wisdom; as the same sort of men, by pleasure destroy happiness; prone to draw

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evil out of good, and set things at variance, which, by nature, are allies. Happiness and pleasure, as wisdom and wit, are each other's friends, or foes; and if foes, of foes the worst. Well-chosen pleasure is a branch of happiness; well-judging wit is a flower of wisdom; but when these petty subalterns set up for themselves, and counteract their principals, one makes a greater wretch, and the other a grosser fool, than could exist without them: Pleasure then calls for our compassion, and Wit for our contempt. Of how many might the names have slept in safety, had not their unlucky parts awakened a just clamour against them?

Have we not a recent and signal instance, how far Wit can set Wisdom at defiance, and, with its artful brilliances, dazzle common understandings? That noble author * smiles at a certain text, of which I shall make a serious use, viz. "When the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, they begot giants;" so when great talents fall in love with mean purposes, they beget errors of an enormous size, both in opinion, and in life. What more enormous than to let infidelity gather such strength, even in our decline, as to stand the terrors of a deathbed, and bequeath proud legacies of its poison to the world? Is not this stretching out our boldness even beyond the day of trial? carrying the war into the very borders (if I may so speak) of that dread Being we dare oppose? and, desperately presuming to achieve that in our grave, of which a Julian of equal genius, though not of equal guilt, despaired on a throne, and that the greatest on earth? Julian was for defeating one prophecy; my Lord is for expunging them all; and, with like success, *Viciis Gublas*, may serve for both.

* Lord Bolingbroke.

Take I too great a freedom? It is both folly and vice to bear any man ill will; but it is also folly and vice, not so to behave, when occasion requires, as that our conduct may be mistaken for ill-will, if the prejudiced think fit. Why should our opponents call that ill-will, which they, if they were of our opinion, and thought us in a fatal error, and heartily wish'd us well, would, necessarily, do out of perfect love? If the Viscount's admirers resent out of zeal to his honour, I assure them, (though I have had no apparition), that his Lordship, now on my side, thanks them not for the favour.

Time was, when those errors, into which he fell, would have been more excusable: for that truth was obscure, and falsehood specious, and opinions endless; and that, in these circumstances, the mind of man could find no rest, because suspense is anxious, and assent almost inevitably betrayed into mistake. This was the sad, and just complaint of the Heathen world, which, by GOD's dereliction, had lost its way, and could not regain it by the feeble glimmering of natural light.

But of what have we to complain, who grope, and wander, and stumble at noon-day? Ours is not ignorance, but perverseness; not want of a guide, but defection from him. Our noble author, so much admired, because so much in the wrong, declares our light to be darkness; and with the boasted acuteness of his superior understanding, instead of couching those that are blind, is for putting out the eyes of those that see. Thus, Heaven's supreme blessing on us in the Gospel, is not annulled only, by our perverseness; but turn'd to much hurt. We are favoured to our misfortune, we are enriched to our loss.

The Heathens courted Truth as a mistress, with

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warm and sincere admirer, but could not obtain her. We, having obtained her, treat her as an abandoned age the lawful partners of their beds, with satiety, and disgust, and a wild desire after new embraces. And what have we embraced? Thus ruin, at best, the palatable doctrine of an age too knowing to need instruction, and too proud to bear it, from Heaven itself :

" Whatever notices of duty to God, or man, are
 " imprinted in us by nature, or deduced by reason,
 " these are obliging, and necessary to be performed
 " by all, as the natural religion : but as for any po-
 " sitive institutions, or particular forms of religion,
 " these are of human origin, stamped in the political
 " mints of craft, interest, or ambition; a coin current
 " for the vulgar only." It is fit, it seems, that the
 vulgar should be fettered, that their superiors may
 expatiate more at large, and not fear to meet with
 rivals in them. And, indeed, if the vulgar had the
 same principles, and opinions, with many of their
 masters, their masters would have as fair a chance to
 have their throats cut, as the murderer to be hang-
 ed for it.

As to God, they say, " The natural religion com-
 " mands us to think worthily, and speak reverently,
 " of Him : but, as some have thought churches de-
 " rogatory to the notions of an omnipresent Being;
 " so formal prayers, and solemn services, are no way
 " necessary to a Being omniscient." They present
 him (if with any) with a more sublime and philo-
 sophical devotion, stripped of all externals, invisible
 as the DEITY himself, and, indeed, as incompre-
 hensible to the multitude; whose religion, like them-
 selves, must have a body, as well as a soul, or it will
 evaporate into nothing. Thus, under pretence of

a compliment to one divine attribute, they rob all of the worship due to them. They pretend to give GOD exalted homage, as the Jews arrayed our blessed LORD in a purple robe, to mock him, not adore. And here our undissembled neglect, if not contempt, of religion, and our barefaced venality, setting all, even souls, to sale, cannot but recal to mind, that these sister-iniquities, as if naturally connected, went hand-in-hand (as the historian tells us) towards the ruin of the Roman commonwealth.

"Deos negligere, omnia venalia habere." *Sallust.*

As to the duties of the second table, they tell us, that "the precepts of nature run evidently against injuries, and injustice; we must, by no means, commit rapine or murder; these are unfociable crimes: but as for any pleasurable enjoyments of ourselves, why deprive ourselves of these? why starve at a feast Heaven sets before us? We cannot conceive GOD to be a tyrant: to what end has he given desires, but that we should satisfy them? or appetites, but that we should indulge them? anger and lust, if constitutional, are venial sins."

Thus the sluices are set open for all sensuality, promiscuous incontinence, and studied arts of excess, to pour in uncontrouled; and by a second compliment to the DEITY, as sincere as my Lord's pretended regard for Christianity, is varnished over a second violation of his laws. Bacchus and Venus, are recalled to a new apotheosis under a Christian ara; and receive daily sacrifice in the fortunes, health, and common dignity of man. What voluntary victims are we! and as victims of old were crowned with flowers, how gayly does poor, devoted Britain bleed at their altars!

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In answer to their pleas, it must be observed, that desires and appetites were not given us out of tyranny, but with an intention doubly kind; as a means both of pleasure, and virtue, if gratified, and restrained, as religion directs. In both views they are blessings, but greatest in the last; yet an Esau will ever be for preferring the former.

Thus you see, Sir, that both the tables of the decalogue are broken, in a more terrible sense than they were by Moses, at his descent from the mount: and from no dissimilar cause. The sufficiency of human reason is the golden calf which these men set up to be worshipped; and in the frenzies of their extravagant devotion to it, they trample on venerable authority; strike at an oak with an osier; the doctrine of GOD's own planting, and the growth of ages, with the sudden and fortuitous shoots of imagination; abortive births of an hour. These human improvements on divine revelation may be compared to the profaning the Holy Bible with the figures of heathen idols, under Antiochus Epiphanes; or rather, to the proud Roman Emperor, who took the head from Jupiter's statue, and placed his own in its stead. These are bold men; but the boldest, we hope, may be reclaimed. That almighty finger which wrote the divine laws twice in stone, cannot want power to give them a new impression in their apostate hearts.

And that they may the more willingly receive that impression, I shall observe, that, setting aside the immortal consequences of infidelity, faith is necessary on its own account, without relation to any thing else. Faith is not only a means of obeying, but a principal act of obedience. It is not only a needful foundation; it is not only as an altar, on

which to sacrifice; but it is a sacrifice itself; and, perhaps, of all the greatest. It is a submission of our understandings, an oblation of our idolised reason, to GOD; which he requires so indispensably, that our whole will and affections, though seemingly a larger sacrifice, will not, without it, be received at our hands.

Does any question this? His Lordship's disciples will be very apt to question it: yet this is true; unless we can suppose the primitive martyrs to have hid down their lives for what was unnecessary to their salvation. For it was not an attestation of their doctrine, but their faith, for which the blessed apostles were persecuted, and the martyrs shed their blood; which they might easily have avoided, if they had insisted only on the moral precepts of their new dispensation. Their moral precepts were approved, and welcomed, by the wisest on earth. Nay, our infidels compliment them, especially when they would give themselves the greater weight in their opposition to our creed; yet, possibly, they had rather subscribe that absurd creed, than stand obliged to practise that morality, which they so much commend.

To renounce or corrupt the faith (one, or both of which is my Lord's point) abstracted from libertine gratifications to follow, or to get rid of fear from those past; there seems to be so little temptation, that I should think none would venture on it, but through ignorance of its guilt. Its guilt, therefore, I have pointed out; which shews that modern Deism, how laudable soever the Deist's life is, is criminal in itself. A virtuous life, rising from a corrupted faith, (if that could possibly be) is as an angel of light supported by a cloven foot; which many seem not to

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believe, otherwise they would not be so often pleading the virtue of Deists, as a full absolution of that fault: whereas we are expressly told, that "the just shall live by faith;" that is, even the just shall not live, that is, be saved, without it.

But though a corrupt faith is sufficiently criminal in itself, yet its guilt rarely rests there; it often produces an irregular life. On the contrary, vicious practice is sure to produce a corrupt faith, or an absolute renunciation of all belief: for the notices of good and ill are so fairly imprinted on our nature, and the practice of them is so strongly guarded by consequent hope and fear, that no conscience is so hardened, as to sin without the shelter of some pretence. The guilty hush conscience with such soft whispers as these; either, Heaven takes not such cognizance of our actions; or, is not so much concerned about them as some imagine; or, its mercy will not suffer it to be just; or, its justice will not suffer it to be so severe, as to punish temporal guilt with eternal pain: all which are corruptions of the faith. Or if these opiates will not do, they proceed to renounce the faith. They give themselves a quite-quieting draught of absolute unbelief: a deity is a dream, and religion a cheat. And thus they throw off their fears, their God, and common sense, together; and are deplorably gay, till they are irremediably undone. How happy might such wretches be, if they knew what a trifle pleasure is to peace! A very trifle it is, even when pleasure is innocent: but when not; when pleasure is an enemy to peace; then, then indeed, it is a trifle no more.

There is a text which must give some surprize to those who doubt whether a bad life occasions a false, or no belief. It is said, "there must be heresies:"

that is, false beliefs. And why? There is certainly no fatal necessity for them from GOD's destination—No; but there is a moral necessity for them from man's corruption. A heart boiling with violent and vicious passions, will send up insatuating fumes to the head; and a delirious giddiness of head will make a man fall into the grossest mistakes, be his natural abilities what they will. A lewd and obstinate will fails not to blind the strongest judgment, as Delila the man of might.

Many, of even those that hold fast the faith, may perhaps not have observed, that faith is doubly precious; it is our duty, and our refuge; nay, it is doubly our refuge. It rescues our passions from flaming into vice; and it rescues our understanding from darkening into errors. The same qualification which is necessary for us, in order to please GOD, is as necessary to secure ourselves from imposture; and not only from such impostures as others may prepare for us, but from our own. It is our sole security against our framing impositions to deceive our own judgments (as shewn above), as well as against our incurring crimes to defeat our salvation.

As to the mysterious articles of our faith, which Infidels would by no means have me forget; "Who," say they, "can swallow them?" In truth, none but those who think it no dishonour to their understandings to credit their Creator. Socinus, like our Infidels, was one of a narrow throat; and, out of generous compassion to the Scriptures (which the world, it seems, had misunderstood for fifteen hundred years) was for wedding them of their mysteries; and rendering them, in the plenitude of his infallible reason, undisgusting, and palatable to all the rational part of mankind. Why should honest Jews and Turks

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be frightened from us by the Trinity? He was for making religion familiar and inoffensive. And so he did; and unchristian too. Those things which our hands can grasp, our understandings cannot comprehend. Why then deny to the DEITY Himself the privilege of being one, amidst that multitude of mysteries which He has made?

Here let me observe, what perhaps has escaped your notice, with regard to the blessed Trinity, which gives our unbelievers the greatest offence. The Revelation of it is not only necessary for our understanding the foundation of Christianity, but is also, I conceive, an absolute demonstration of its truth. Because it is a mystery, which by Nature could not possibly have entered into the imagination of man; which they, who most explode it, confess, by their obstinate rejection of it. For why do they reject it, but on that very account? Our opponents, therefore, in some measure, support us in our attachment to this supreme article of our Creed, which they most condemn; and (what is somewhat remarkable in favour of our faith) support us in it by the very cause for which it is condemned by them.

Mysteries, that is, those great and hidden things of our religion, whose truth we are assured of by divine authority, but the manner of their being surpasses our understanding: such as the plurality of persons in the Divine Unity: GOD manifest in the flesh: the operation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers: the spiritual presence of CHRIST in the eucharist: the uniting our scatter'd parts from the dust of death: all which the scriptures have expressly delivered as catholic truths: several of these, several heretics have rejected; and the Socinians have, in a manner, rejected them all. Faith in these

is more acceptable to God, than faith in less abstruse articles of our religion; because it pays that honour which is due to his testimony; and the more seemingly incredible the matter is which we believe, the more respect we shew to the relator of it. This (putting in a caveat against the ridicule of Infidels) may be called heroic faith, correspondent to heroic virtue, at which, out of prudence, they must smile.

This heroic faith may be more acceptable to God (some may say;) but, sure, not more useful to man. It may have a good influence on another life; but what account does *this* find in it? Who can shew me the moral effects of it?—From faith in these mysteries, man necessarily, and more justly, adores the incomprehensible Majesty of God; and more justly and perfectly contemplates his own littleness, and disproportion of thought to those truths that are vouchsafed to his faith. Hence he heartily renders God a due honour for his testimony; and a due acknowledgment of his professed care of his church; and a due thankfulness for the mercy of his revelation. He renders a due obedience to his proper government, as a Christian, that is, the authority of the church; and a due assistance to the public peace, which is never safely built but on unity of judgment. And as to his private virtue, he keeps in due subjection the pride of understanding, that most vicious affection of the mind, which, if let loose, would be attended with a multitude of evils; and with one in particular, which occasions this letter. But though we could see none of these temporal advantages, yet would it be most reasonable in us to believe; unless we, who think it right to believe implicitly in those on whom our fortune depends, think

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is wrong to believe implicitly in him on whom depends our salvation.

But there is, I confess, some error on our own part, with regard to mysteries. We, perhaps, have given some small excuse for our Infidels contempt of mysteries, by more pious, than prudent attempts, that have been sometimes made toward an explanation of them. A mystery explained, is a mystery destroyed: for what is a mystery, but a thing not known? But things not known may reasonably be believed; in the very strangest things there may be truth; and in things very credible, a lie*.

It is with our understandings as with our eyes. Both have their mysteries: both have objects beyond their reach; some accidentally, some absolutely. We see not those objects that are placed in an obscure light, because there is a defect in the medium: we see not those that are vested with too much light, because there is a weakness in the sensory, unable to sustain such strong impressions. Thus it is with the objects of our understanding: some things we know not, for want of being duly informed. Salvation was a mystery to the Gentiles; but ceased so to be when revealed by the gospel. Other things we know not, because they exceed the measure of our comprehension. Thus, some articles of our faith are such mysteries, as by no revelation can cease to be so. They must be mysteries while men are men; while yet unblest with powers that are not indulged to this imperfect state. As it is bold and vain, so, perhaps, it has even been prejudicial to the truth, to labour at rational evictions of sacred mysteries; for, by these means, men attempt to comprehend the

* Quintil. Institut. l. iv. c. 2.

divine nature, by putting it under some injurious disguise; as we venture to gaze at the sun, after we have watched it into a cloud.

GOD forbid images of Himself, because it is impossible that any sensible representations could do otherwise than derogate from Him that is invisible: nor can the diminishing imagery of our notions derogate less from Him that is incomprehensible. I presume not to censure those who have made use of illustrations to the proper ends of piety; all I mean is, that fallible ratiocination should not be made the ground of faith, whose proper basis is infallible testimony. Nor is it longer faith than while it rests on that; for when I believe, not so much what is revealed, as what my own reason pronounces to be true, I believe not GOD, but myself. I assume, not obey; and give proof rather of the pride, than humiliation, of my reason; whereas its humiliation is a principal end aimed at by GOD's so strict demand of our faith.

And, indeed, far from humiliation, and even common modesty, must he be, who hopes to give light to those mysteries which St Paul, with all his learning, eloquence, and inspiration, pronounced to be to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks, those most subtle of men, foolishness: that is, they thought it folly to believe them, because unintelligible; and because they did not apprehend, that there was any divine authority to compel their belief. And such Greeks have we; Epicurean Greeks, sensual, subtle, and unbelieving; and whose celebrated writings are of equal authority with

"Quicquid Græciæ mendan

"Audet in historia."

You.

Men, who reject divine assistance as too officious, with a sort of disdain, as if it affronted their own

abilities; and whose presumptuous opinions are indubitably spread, by pest-men, thro' the land.

With the gross and horrid effects of such opinions, and their consequences, the distemper'd age groans, and kingdoms shake, and judgments threaten. And well they may. How many private families have their infamous secrets? how many public transactions their barefaced iniquity? High courts of justice have their *jus datum sceleris*, and blush not to plead precedent for the violation of their own laws; and the corruption of the times, for more corruption still. Is not this heaping mountain upon mountain against Heaven? and think we, Heaven will never return the blow?

We have had already, nay, now have, some light and merciful admonitions from Heaven. But can it be thought, that an age of judgments, and pestilences; of riots, and distresses; of excessive debts, and excessive expence; of public poverty, and private accumulation; of new sects in religion, and new fallies in sin; and every other contradiction to common sense, does not call for more? I, Sir, am fasten'd to the country; nor know I much of that larger and fouler sink of debauchery, in which you breathe. But even here I know too much. Where is that village that has not its suicides of intemperance; or its bold adventurers for still quicker death from the hand of public justice? And, to confirm that opinion above advanced, of the close tie and mutual growth of vice and unbelief, almost every cottage can afford us one that has corrupted, and every palace one that has renounced, the faith.

I know, Sir, you will tell me, that it is the business of our common piety, to deplore; of our prayers, to distrust; and of our lives, rather than our harangues,

to confute them. True; for if our Christianity is to be found no where but in our books, the Christian and Infidel may drop their dispute. A Tillotson, and a Bolingbroke are on the same side: their contest is but verbal; their agreement is essential, and their association will prove eternal.

But, Sir, it is our duty to speak and write (if we can), as well as live, against the enemies of our Christian faith. I proceed, therefore, to observe, that the Viscount's arguments against the authority of the scriptures have been long since answered. But he is not without precedent in this point. This repetition of already refuted arguments, seems to be a deistical privilege, or distemper, from which few of them are free. Even echoes of echoes are to be found amongst them; which evidently shews, that they write not to discover truth, but to spread infection; which old poison re-administred will do, as well as new; and it will be struck deeper into the constitution by repeating the same dose. Besides, new writers will have new readers. The book may fall into hands unsainted before; or, the already infected may swallow it more greedily in a new vehicle; or, they that were disgusted with it in one vehicle, may relish it in another. I therefore ask pardon; what I mis-called distemper, I find, on second thoughts, is perfect prudence: but such prudence as, with them, would throw a Christian writer into the bottom of contempt.

There are more reasons for Deists to be dissatisfied with themselves than those already given. Infidel is an opprobrious name: but time was, when Deism was the true religion; and they are for still retaining the credit once due to that character. It is therefore fit for a friend to Christianity, nor less fit for a friend to them, to take notice, that it is im-

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possible for a good man, that is, one aiming at the divine favour above all things, to reject an offered revelation, without enquiring into its title to the high character it assumes: and, that it is as impossible (in my opinion) for a reasonable man to reject the Christian revelation, if he does enquire. He, therefore, who continues a Deist, in a land enlightened by the gospel, must be wanting in goodness, or reason; must be either criminal, or dull. None, therefore, can be more mistaken than they that profess Deism, for the credit of superior understanding, or for the sake of exercising a more pure and perfect virtue. Yet these are the only pretences which they do, at date avow, for their fatal choice. Must not, then, their real motive be of a nature which they think prudent to conceal?

But to conceal it, is not easy; for reason, our defective reason, in many points of the last moment to man, wants, wishes, calls for a revelation; and cannot but accept, when offered, what it calls for: that is, reasonable Deists cannot but become Christians, where the gospel shines.

Or argue thus, (for it admits of various proof :) God ALMIGHTY would not have made a revelation, but in order to be received. And by whom received? doubtless, by the reasonable, and good. And if by some of them, why not by all? and if all the reasonable and good receive it, what must they be that reject it? Therefore revealed religion rejected, proves natural religion disobeyed. I said, above, that Deists were blameable, how good soever their lives might be: but now it seems to appear, that their lives cannot be good. Others, perhaps, have forbore speaking so plain, out of charity. I venture on it out of what I conceive to be charity

greater still : for nothing that can awaken them can be kindly suppressed.

Cornelius, the centurion, though one of the best of men, thought not the belief of the gospel unnecessary to his salvation. But modern Deists, wiser, not better than he, have their objections to the gospel. Their chief objection is against its mysteries. There is nothing mysterious, but with regard to things which we either can not, or need not, understand : cannot, through the limitation of the human intellect ; or need not, through the sufficiency of other means, and motives for our leading good lives. To what amounts, then, this capital objection, and charge against it ? To no more than this, viz. That Christianity performs not what is impossible to be performed ; for it is as impossible for its author, ALMIGHTY GOD, to do more than is needful for his gracious end, viz. the good lives of mankind ; as to do what, in its nature, is impossible to be done.

Indeed, all their objections to Christianity seem to be no more, nor less, than playing the best card they have ; than using the best expedient they can think of, to keep themselves in countenance, and the world in the dark, as to the true motive of their apostasy. Nor are their objections to be looked on, in those that are men of sense, as an argument of their disbelief, but their dislike. They wish not the mysteries removed ; for that would rob them of a favourite objection. They wish not the darkness of the mysteries removed, but transferred ; transferred from the doctrines, to the moral precepts. These are without a cloud ; these are too plain for their purpose. None ever fully complied with these, but was easily reconciled to the mysteries of the gospel. The disgusted, despotic heart commands the passio-

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obedient head, to fight its unjust quarrel, and say it is its own : so that Satan may blame them for some degree of hypocrisy in his favour; may blame them for only pretending to disbelieve. If, on the other hand, Christians were not also hypocrites; hypocrites, I mean, as to practice; they would rob the Deists of their most plausible plea against us; and either lessen their numbers, or encrease their shame.

I hope that some of the Deists, at least some of those whose principles are endangered by them, may admit some little impression from what has been offered. I hope they may discern, and own the self-accusation which is, evidently, implied in our Deists renunciation of Christianity: or, if I am mistaken, that they will set me right; for, if I have wronged them, I have wronged them much. For, in what a disadvantageous light appear these deserters from Christianity in these pages! A Deistical tongue, a Christian conscience, and a partly Pagan heart! what a sad composition is this! It is a far heavier charge than I wish to find true.

But it is a natural question, "How comes it to pass, that men of parts should so much disaffect the scriptures, so admirable, and still more and more admirable, in proportion to the discernment of their reader?"

Can it be from ignorance? It may be so, if their hearts are worse than their heads; for there are parts of scripture which none but a good man can well understand; "Rejoice always: and again, I say, Rejoice." This must appear to the vicious, absurd, because impracticable, and therefore un-inspired. To rejoice in tribulation, they have neither cause nor power. Thus, bad manners, almost necessarily, render men Infidels to holy writ. On the contrary, a

good life is a key to the scriptures. "The secret of the Lord is with those that fear him." A text this, as unintelligible to the vicious as the former. As he has had no experience, so neither has he any comprehension of its truth. The good man comprehends, and feels it too. Thus the scripture, like the cloudy pillar which it records, is light to the true Israelites, but darkness to the Egyptians. Hence acutest understandings, in religious debates, often lose their edge.

Can that cause we seek be vanity? It may be said of the Viscount's writings, as of Catiline, *Satis eloquentia, sapientia parum*. Had his eloquence been less; had those talents been denied him which flattered him with hope of shining a first lustre in the lettered world, he had escaped a temptation, which has evidently been too hard for his prudence; and a common-sized head had, probably, left his heart in safety. So formidable a possession is an immortal pen (if his is immortal); a pen more fatal to its master than Cato's sword.

Or might not envy be the cause we seek? "But can these men envy Christians, whom they quit on account of our unhappy mistake?" Man is not only desirous, but ambitious too, of happiness. He but ill bears that another should be happier than himself; because superior happiness is a natural argument of superior wisdom or worth. The man of a libertine life, knows that the good Christian, if his religion is true, is, on the whole, much happier than himself. Therefore he wishes it to be false; and endeavours to find it so: and strong endeavours to be in the wrong, Heaven will punish with success. It will permit them to believe their own lie; that is,

to fall on their own sword, which was drawn against the truth.

"Non hoc quaesitum munus in usus."

Virg.

And I am the more inclined to impute their opposition to envy, rather than vanity; because pure vanity is consistent with good-nature, and may be a very candid thing: but envy has bitterness, and ill-will; and ridicule is the genuine child of ill-nature: ridicule, that offensive brat, of which they are so fond.

Now, though nothing is more improper in important debates than raillery; yet can I make some apology for them. They may possibly perceive, that the load on their own misgiving consciences would sink them, were it not for the light expedient of forced mirth, like a bladder filled with wind, to keep them above water: and that they, sometimes, have their doubts, and misgivings of heart, it is reasonable to believe. To give full-established security, is the incommunicable privilege of the go^dpel.

For the reasons above, I venture to set down envy among the causes of Infidelity, though, I think, by others overlooked. And, further, I believe it to be a very principal cause of lettered Infidelity in the world. Other, but not greater vices are, doubtless, the chief cause of Infidelity in lower, and illiterate life; where sense has no rival in thought, but tyrannises alone.

But whatever is the cause of their Infidelity, be it ignorance, vanity, envy, or any other vice, their Infidelity will naturally have some effect in our favour. It is much to be hoped, that it will put us on our guard, and make us better men. Our leading a bad life, is playing into their hands. It is giving them an argument in the debate, against ourselves. Tho'

the argument is bad, yet it is an argument *still*. And since they have none but bad arguments, and such they will make use of, we should not increase the number. This is like furnishing them with ammunition to protract the war: and though the war protracted will not hurt us, yet will it hurt them: and, as we are Christians, that should give us an equal concern.

Secondly, Christianity may thank its opponents for much new light, from time to time, thrown in on the sublime excellence of its nature, and the manifestation of its truth: opponents, in some sort, more welcome than its friends; as they do it signal service without running it in debt; and have no demand on our gratitude for the favours they confer. The stronger its adversaries, the greater its triumph: the more it is disputed, the more indisputably will it shine. With what pious pleasure must you see the brightest talents striking at it, with the most hearty good-will, yet dropping harmless, like old Priam's spear?

“*Telum imbelle sine ictu*

“*Conjecit; raucos quod protenus aere repulsum;*

“*Et summo clypei nequicquam umbone perpendit.*”

Virg.

Christianity, that great support of Man's welfare, and God's glory, like a well-built arch, the greater load of opposition and reproach its enemy lays on it, the stronger it stands.

Thirdly, Their antichristian writings may detect them: for since (as shewn above) a false faith, or no faith at all, is the natural consequence of a bad life, it is possible that the gentlemen in the opposition, while they are giving us their opinions, may be gi-

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ing us more: they may be discovering their morals, while they mean only to teach us their creed: and, thus, they may carry, like Bellesophon, their own condemnation, while they imagine they are, graciously, conveying intelligence, and new light to mankind: so that the old proverb, *Bellerophonis litera*, may be a proper motto for the learned labours of them all.

But condemnation from others will be much more supportable than their own; if that should fall on them: and where is he on whom it shall not one day fall? If a man born blind, who had never so much as heard of the sun, moon, and stars, should suddenly receive sight, he would not be more astonished at the first rushing in of those material glories, than would the man, by vice struck blind to religion, be, at his first conviction of heavenly truths, viz. divine manifestations, awful revelations, fulfilled prophecies, numberless miracles, and one unbroken chain of marvellous expedients, from before creation to this hour, for our salvation; those spiritual luminaries, those (dare I say?) sun, moon, and stars of the moral world, if God should give him light. Till then, walking in darkness, he must mistake danger for safety, shame for glory, and mischief for pleasure. Like the blinded of Sodom, he reaches eagerly after, and presses hard for enjoyment; but of real enjoyment, of true felicity, he cannot find the door; as I propose shewing in my next.

If some part of it may seem too severe, I must observe, that no man can strike fire with a feather. A fire elemental is diffused through all nature, though locked up in dark matter, and unapparent in most parts of our globe. Thus, I conceive, that there is divine grace spread through all hearts, (where not

entirely quenched by vice), tho' unactive, and dormant in them. No slight animadversion can awake it. It must be a blow of some force, that strikes it out of a heart of flint : and such there must be in these days of darkness, when few sparks of grace are apparent : such there must be when Infidelity prevails ; for Infidelity, and Faith, are the day and night of the moral world. One reveals, the other hides heaven from our thoughts. Happy am I, if this letter shall occasion the smallest dawn on but one single heart, in this our grand eclipse. With you, dear Sir, the dawn is long since past ; and that you may continue in the light, till Heaven, at that knock of faith which only will be heard, shall admit you into perfect day, where undisputed truth, and unmistaken pleasure, with endless glory, crown the Just ; this is the prayer of

Your affectionate humble Servant.

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L E T T E R II.

DEAR SIR,

I NOW proceed to say something of Pleasure; that subject which you so warmly recommend; not aware, I believe, that it may be long before men, whose faults set the public eye at defiance, will learn to blush when alone in their closets. And till then, what hope of much reformation from the pen? Besides, though our transgressions with regard to pleasure are great, yet they are not new. To the scandal of the Antediluvians be it spoken, there were British iniquities before the flood. To such a degree have all moral subjects been exhausted, that it is difficult for a writer on them not to repeat, though he is no plagiarist. But your desires are an apology for my deficiencies in compliance with them.

Whether we are more hardened in Infidelity, or softened in Pleasure, may be disputed: but none can deny that the love of pleasure is the root of every crime. Theft, murder, perjury, are a few of its fatal fruits; nor the worst. But I shall not dip so deep in its consequences; yet deep enough to render the name of a *man of pleasure*, which some affect for their honour, not only ridiculous, but detestable.

What an extravagant dominion does Pleasure exercise over us! It is not only the pestilence that walketh in darkness; but an arrow that destroyeth at noon-day. The moon hides her face at our midnight enormities; and the morning blushes on our unfinished debauch: I am almost tempted to say, that our impudent folly puts Nature out of countenance. But there is no need by words to exaggerate the fa-

tal truth. Our luxury is beyond example, and beyond bounds; it stops not at the poor: even they that live on alms are infected with it.

It has often been observed, that it is with states, as with men. They have their birth, growth, health, distemper, decay, and death. Men sometimes drop suddenly by an apoplexy; states, by conquest: in full vigour, both. As man owes his mortality to original sin; some states owe their fall to some defect, or infelicity in their original constitution. But contracted distemper is the most common ruin of states and men: and what national distemper more mortal than our own? On the soft beds of luxury most kingdoms have expired.

If causes should not fail of their usual effect; if our national distemper, far from being cutaneous at present, should reach the vitals of our state, how applicable to this opulent, proud, profligate metropolis (which calls the sea her own, and whose vices, more diffusive, are without a shore) would be the prophet's sacred dirge over ancient Tyre; whose sea-born wealth, and hell-born iniquity, let it not be said, was but a prelude to our own? And yet if we proceed in our infernal career, that most infamous reproach may become too true.

The sublime, and most memorable words run thus; and I cannot but think that, at present, they must have a formidable sound in a British ear: "Is this
" the joyous city? whose antiquity is of days remote!
" whose merchants were princes, and her traffickers
" the honourable of the earth? whose revenue was
" the harvest of rivers? and her exchange the mart
" of nations? who sat as a queen; stretched out her
" hand over the seas; and shook the kingdoms? But
" she is fallen! she is fallen! Heaven has stained the

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"pride of all her glory. How sorely must you be
"pained at the report!"

Has not Britain reason to be more deeply struck with this part of Scripture than the rest of mankind? The prophecy as yet, indeed, thro' mercy, is unfulfilled in us: but if Britain continues, like Tyre,—
"To sing as a harlot; to take the harp; to make
"sweet melody; sing many songs; turn to her hire;
"and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of
"the world,"—her fall is to be feared, unless the fate of most former empires betray us into mistake; and that national poison which has ever proved mortal, is mortal no more. If the fate of kingdoms is lodged in a just and impartial hand, what but the grossest self-flattery can banish our fears? And if our fears are banished, leave it not unobserved that our very want of fear is a proof of our danger: for Heaven insatuates, when it determines to destroy.

"But such a general face of affluence and gaiety;
"are these signs of ruin?" Not signs only, but causes of it too. Not Babylon alone has been smitten at a banquet, and perished in its joys. Most nations have been gayest, when nearest to their end; and, like a taper in the socket, have blazed, as they expired.

Were our fathers to rise from their graves, they would conceive that their fortune had thrown them on some day of public festivity, nor imagine that every day was drunk of the same disease. By our gaiety, we seem to celebrate the perpetual triumph of the millennium; by our vices, to add to it the manners of the antediluvian world; and, by our security under them, to put full confidence in the divine promise that the world shall be drowned no more. If with the vices of the Antediluvians, we

had their years too, more might be said in our excuse : but to weigh such a moment against eternity, shews that the balance is in very weak hands. The world, which the divine vengeance swept away for its enormities, was incapable of so great a guilt.

But in so general a dissolution of manners, are there none that stand entitled to more particular blame ? Are not our great patrons of luxury a sort of anti-Curtii, who leap into the gulph for the ruin of their country ? Their country's ruin they threaten by the malignity of their example ; while by the profusion of their expence they nearly finish their own. What a weakness is self-denial ? what idle self-tormentors are penitents ? what wretched lunatics, or gross suicides, are the noble army of martyrs, if these men are in the right ? How cheap would their pleasures come, if they cost them nothing more than their health, credit, and estates ?

Pleasure is in some sort more pernicious than direct vice. Vice has, naturally, some horror in it. It startles, and alarms the conscience, and puts us on our guard. Pleasure, under the colour of being harmless, has an opiate in it ; it stupefies and besots. In the soft lap of Pleasure conscience falls asleep. Vice, losing its horror, becomes familiar. And as vice encreases, some expedient becomes necessary to reconcile us to ourselves. Thus, looking out for some shadow of excuse, we naturally slide into groundless doubts, and become Infidels out of pure self-defence.

And, as pleasure makes us Infidels, by stupefying the conscience ; so it makes us very bad husbands of temporal enjoyments, by darkening our understandings ; and thus unqualifies us for the very point to which alone we pretend.

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ders our voluptuaries from discerning, that their blind rage for pleasure turns blessings into their reverse. Birth, education, and abundance, are great blessings: but, abused by pleasure into motives and instruments of indulgence, birth is more ignoble than obscurity; knowledge is more pernicious than ignorance; and abundance more a misfortune than want. Men of rank, (and of such I speak), if wrong, can scarce avoid sinning beyond themselves. How pestilential their example falls on the lower world, which under the welcome force of such illustrious authority turns dissolute, as much for the sake of their credit, and fortune, as of their lusts; pride, and interest, bringing needless succour to loose desire; and Tyburn has sometimes reaped, what assemblies have sown. Great men in the wrong, are powerful engines of mischief, and, like bursting bombs, destroy themselves, and all around them.

And as to the two supreme blessings, and glories of man, their reason, and immortality; these, as they manage it, flame out into vengeance too great to be mentioned without horror. Their reason serves only to render them more guilty; and their immortality to render endless the sad wages of their guilt.

It is this cloud on our understanding which makes us so little masters in the very science we profess. Happiness is our study, but are we not dunces in it? We know not, or seem not to know, that all real enjoyment lyes within the compass of GOD's commands, which abridge not, but defend them; that when we dip too deep in pleasure, we stir a sediment, that renders it impure and noxious: that (as much a paradox as it may seem) the best means of arriving at the true pleasures of the body, is to preserve and cultivate the powers of the soul; and that a good

understanding is, in man, the source, and security of mere animal delight.

Let these gentlemen take notice that I am not against enjoyment; I am as great a lover of it as they; for without a relish of the good things of life, we cannot be thankful. Enjoy, but enjoy reasonably, and thankfully to the great Donor; that will secure us from excess. To enjoy, is our wisdom, and our duty; it is the great lesson of human life; but a lesson which few have learned; and none less than these, who proclaim themselves masters of art in it.

It is this pleasure-bred cloud on the understanding, which makes us forget, that virtue is the health of the soul; that all provision and parade from without, can make a sensualist just as happy, as the same can make an invalid; that both have pains adhering, necessarily, to their present state; that both have rather remedies than joys; that assemblies, balls, masquerades, &c. are but as well-stored hospitals, unnecessary to the sound; and but poor palliatives to the sick: though pretenders to more than health, they confess our distemper; and, what is worse, encrease the distemper they confess: and gift of distempers the worst, a wrong judgment in our most important point.

I grant, that in the boundless field of licentiousness, some bastard joys may rise, that look gay, more especially at a distance; but they soon wither. No joys are always sweet, and flourish long, but such as have self-approbation for their root, and the divine favour for their shelter. We are for rootless joys, joys beyond appetite; which is the sole root of sensual delight. We are for joys not of man's native growth, but forced up by luxurious art: dugged by great expence; and shone on, not by the divine fa-

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your, but a strong imagination, which gives them all their little taste; and makes them apt, like other crude fruits, to surfeit, and destroy. We are, in a word, for joys of our own creation, the seeds of which Heaven never sowed in our hearts. But we may as well invade another prerogative of Heaven, and, with the tyrant of Elis, pretend to make thunder and lightning, as real joy. I say, real joy; joy we may make, but not chearfulness. Joy may subsist without thought; chearfulness rises from it. Joy is from the pulse; chearfulness from the heart. That may give a momentary flash of pleasure; this alone makes a happy man. And happy men there may be, who never laughed in their lives; and in a situation, where reason calls for the reverse, there is not in nature so melancholy a thing as joy.

It is this intellectual cloud, which hangs, like a fog, over every gay resort of our moral invalids (though invisible to common eyes), which slings us not only into mistakes, but contradictions. How sick are we of yesterday! yet how fond of to-morrow, though devoted to the same cheat as the past! Which slings us into contradictions not only in reason, but contradictions to sense. We can't believe that fatigue, is fatigue; let its cause be what it will. Too much recreation tires, as much as too much business; yet one we swallow; are choaked by the other. The man of business has, at least, his seventh day's rest. Our fever for folly never intermits. Our week has no sabbath in it. So much harder is the master whom we serve, than that of better men; and yet, to our infamous honour be it spoken, we are better servants than they. How do we run, labour, expend; expose ourselves, hurt our families, resist unbounded, eternal temptations to wisdom; offer up the rich sa-

trifles of conscience and understanding; watch; watch late; and all, but pray for his service? Quite, indeed with protracted amusements, we yawn over them. The dull drone of nominal diversion still humming on, when the short tune of enjoyment is over, lulls us quite asleep. Like the bear in the Fable, we hug our darling to death. Instead of rejoicing in tribulation (of which few among us ever heard), we sorrow in delight: for to speak the truth (though we would not have it divulged), we tread this eternal round of vanities, less for the pleasure it brings, than for the pain it suspends. It is a refuge, not a prize. Like criminals (as we are), we fly to it from our much-injured, unforgiving foes, from ourselves; which chide and sting us, when alone; when together, we support each others spirits; which is like sailors clinging to each other for safety, when the vessel is sinking. We fly from ourselves, because we first fly from our Maker. Wretched flight! hell is nothing but an entire absence from him; and every partial departure has its proportion of it.

But those deep draughts of pleasure which beat us, must answer for all absurdities; and, among the rest, for our entire ignorance of the nature of that world in which we live. Mirth at a funeral is less more indecent and unnatural, than a perpetual flight of gaiety, and burst of exultation, in a world like this: a world, which may seem a paradise to fools, but is an hospital with the wise; a world, in which bare escape is a prime felicity. *Effugere est triumphare.*

The numberless pains of body and mind; the dark, solemn approaches to, or dismal vestibules of the grave, as well as opening graves themselves, are so thick scattered over the face of the whole earth,

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that an unpetrified heart can't look around without feeling an inevitable damp, and general disconsolation; and venting a sigh universal for the whole family of Adam, for the lot of all mankind. Nothing but strong faith in eternal life could hinder tears from bursting o'er it: nor are tears too much; for sympathy is the chief duty of human life.

Were one tenth part of the wretchedness seen, that is felt, it would strike us with horror. Heaven means to make one half of the species a moral lecture to the other. It surrounds us with deplorable objects, not more for the sake of the wretched, than for our own; that our compassion awakened, may awaken our prudence; and teach us what we have to do, by shewing us what we have to fear. Shall the rich, and the well-educated, throw their abundance down the sink of unprofitable and untasted delights, while untaught multitudes mistake and sin; and indigent multitudes shiver, and starve? While we think we are sparing expences, we are running in debt. How deep are we in arrears to the distressed! The distressed have, from reason, as just a demand on our superfluities, as we have, from law, on our stewards for our estates. But this is no play-debt, and therefore, without dishonour, undischarged.

Is then my repeated censure of intellectual darkness too severe? I wish it were. But alas! how distant from their thoughts are the points the most important! how foreign to their interest, all that is nearest their hearts! When I speak of their darkness, I do not forget my own. There is not that man on earth that does not well deserve censure, and even from them. But there is difference in deviation from the right. Mulattos are not Ethiopians. I grant in their excuse, that, tho' all can see folly in

pleasures past; yet must he be wiser than Solomon, who sees it in those to come. Yet wiser than Solomon, in this respect, must we be, or continue mere ideots; and ideots with regard to the present life; for this life's enjoyment lyes, chiefly, in our title to the joys of the next; as earth becomes fruitful from the kind influence of the distant sun.

And now what occasion of advancing any thing more to the condemnation of these sons of Epicurus, and in disfavour of Pleasure, than this, viz. That by darkening our understandings, it robs us of this world; and by stupefying our consciences, of the next. So far are they from their boasted happiness, that even in the judgment of a heathen (not to mention the scripture, of much less authority with them), they are dead while yet alive. "Is demum, vivere, atque anima frui videtur; qui alicui intentus negotio, aut artis bonæ, aut præclari facinoris sumus quærit." *Sallust.*

It is said of their master Epicurus, *Deos verba reliquit, re sustulit.* By his, and their, goddess Pleasure, they do just the same. They loudly boast, and actually destroy it; the first through want of modesty, the last through want of understanding. But they must keep themselves in countenance, though out of heart; and make themselves some small amends from vanity, for what is wanting to reason, and to sense.

Nor tread they their master's steps in this alone. He, out of a swarm of dancing atoms, was for making a world: they, out of a giddy whirl of innumerable amusements, those minute particles of Pleasure, are for forming happiness: a system equally philosophical, and of equal success. A God alone can make

one; the god-like only can achieve the other: and where are they to be found in his hopeful school?

The one thing necessary for happiness is in common to both worlds; this, and the next. In vain we seek a different receipt for it, one in time, another in eternity. Virtue wanting, every thing else becomes necessary to happiness, and ineffectual. To what amounts, then, the boast of their numberless felicities? It brings, in proof of their happiness, a demonstration of their misery. "A good man shall be satisfied from himself alone." A bad man shall be dissatisfied, with all the world at his devotion.

But there is a third particular, in which, if they had followed their master, it would have been more for their advantage and credit: an indulgent providence has abundantly provided us with irreprovable pleasures: why are these swept away with an ungrateful hand, to make room for poisons of our own deadly composition, to be placed in their stead? Epicurus was in love with his gardens. But that is an amour too innocent for them: a garden has ever had the praise, and affection, of the wise. What is requisite to make a wise, and happy man, but reflection, and peace? and both are the natural growth of a garden. Nor is a garden only a promoter of a good man's happiness, but a picture of it; and, in some sort, shews him to himself. Its culture, order, fruitfulness, and seclusion from the world, compared to the weeds, wildness, and exposure of a common field, is no bad emblem of a good man, compared to the multitude. A garden weeds the mind; it weeds it of worldly thoughts: and sows celestial seed in their stead. For what see we there, but what awakens in us our gratitude to Heaven? A garden to the virtuous, is a paradise still extant; a paradise

unlost. What a rich present from Heaven, of sweet incense to man, was wasted in that breach! What a delightful entertainment of sight glows on yonder bed, as if, in kindly showers, the watry bow had shed all its most celestial colours on it! Here are no objects that fire the passions: none that do not instruct the understanding, and better the heart, while they delight the sense; but not the sense of these men. To them the tulip has no colours; the rose no scent: their palate for pleasure is so deadened, and burnt out, by the violent stroke of higher tastes, as leaves no sensibility for the softer impressions of these; much less for the relish of those philosophic, or moral sentiments, which the verdant walk, clear stream, embowering shade, pendant fruit, or rising flower, those speechless, not powerless orators, ever praising their great Author, inspire: much less still for their religious inspirations. Who cannot look on a flower till he frightens himself out of Infidelity? Religion is the natural growth of the works of God; and Infidelity, of the inventions of men.

Spiritually blind, deaf, and stupid, they see not the great Omnipresent walking in the garden; they hear not his call; they know not that they are naked; they hide not among the trees, but stand in open defiance of his laws. Religion is far from them.

And where can we hope religion, if not in age? And are there Hecubas to be found among the bright Helens of our times? Is diversion grown a leveller, like death? Can assemblies banish distinction, and shew us all dates, like church-yards? the latter, for their years, is the more proper scene. Give me leave, Sir, to address them; and address them in haste: they may die by to-morrow. To-night they are

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Joining at the assembly. Thither, for a moment, imagination transports me to attend them.

"So various, Ladies! and cogent, are the reasons which might call you to this place, that I am at a loss which to thank for the honour it receives.

"Come you to admire, or to be admired? Your modesty declines the last. Come you out of kind-

"ness; then, to authorise those amusements you refuse not to adorn? or come you, out of compas-

"sion, to make these young criminals appear more innocent, than they could appear uncompar'd with

"superior indiscretion? or come you, out of piety, to return thanks at this religious house, for your

"so narrowly escaping the grave? or come you, out of pure generosity, to heighten the mirth of the

"night: Your point is carried. What borrowed ornaments are these? Is vanity still in its spring?

"Is the folly of hairless heads putting forth its gay blossoms in the December of life? Age cannot

"drop its dignity, and yet retain its privileges. It must be laughed at, if it will not be revered; and

"subjects of reverence cannot enter at these doors. We reverence age, as we reverence noble birth; on

"supposition, both: if our supposition proves false, our homage dies.

"A little entertainment, you say, is natural.— What a portentous jumble of seasons, what a vio-

"lution of nature is this; winter dancing with the spring! Where are the first partakers of your pas-

"simes, when pastimes became you? Their very monuments are in ruins. What real connection

"of heart, or interests, can you have with any now alive? And without such connection, how insipid

"your commerce with them! Sure you cannot ap-

" prove Mesenius's connection of the living with
" the dead.

" Hang your hours, though, probably, so few, so
" very heavy on your hands, that you had rather
" bear contempt, than them? Is it drowned by the
" sprightly viol, or hear you yon solemn bell? Wants
" that the power to call you to your closets, which
" calls your grand children to their graves? Is it
" thus you discharge the duties of age to the rising
" generation? Whatever seeds of prudence you would
" sow in their hearts, before they can take root,
" these vanities blow away; especially, if you, like
" the ladies of Lapland, heighten the * Hurricane
" yourselves.

" Have you never heard, my good Ladies! of the
" redemption of time? you carry yours to market,
" and sell it for nothing; nay, you dearly buy it off
" your hands. Can nothing but such trifles, such
" murder of time, make you think that you are alive?
" Can nothing but the stroke of death convince you,
" you shall die? To their beauty alone, too much
" amusement is forgiven, even in the young. What,
" then, have you to plead?—That which is fairer
" than beauty, if you will call it to your aid: Virtue
" can reconcile our aspect to wrinkles: It can ren-
" der age amiable, when bloom smiles in vain. But
" vice and deformity, when twisted together, is such
" a Gorgon, as turns the tenderest heart into stone.

" Pardon, Ladies! that I presume to call that vice,
" which you will soften by some milder name. What
" is innocence in youth, may be vice in years. Be-
" sides, mark the mischief of what you call harm-
" less expedients to smoothe the rugged path of life.
" You spread that path with snares, to the ruin of

* Some assemblies so called.

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"those you love. You make parental authority, that
 "natural safeguard of youth, their temptation to
 "folly; and filial obedience, so lovely, so pious, the
 "strange cause of their crimes. Through such mazes
 "of more than folly, when parents lead the way;
 "children, out of pure duty, may tread their wrong
 "steps. Or, if they have more discernment, or more
 "grace; what follows?—What you yourselves will
 "be shocked to hear, and I to tell; a daughter
 "blushing for her who bore her. Which, to my
 "knowledge, and astonishment, has been the too
 "memorable, and too deplorable case."

Here I would fain leave off, and throw a mantle
 over the nakedness of our own sex; but that would
 be too great partiality. It is too sure Adam also fell.
 As I have spoken to his daughters, I must speak, Sir,
 by your permission, now to his aged sons. I can
 speak with more freedom to these: I was forced to
 spare his daughters, out of decency.

"Ye first on roll for eternity! why this waste of
 "time? why is its date quite crased? Your spruce
 "appearance is a perfect forgery. And deserves it
 "not the wonted penalty for it? You, for whom it
 "is almost as unnatural, as for a mole, to be seen
 "above-ground; what mean you by trespassing on
 "this nether world? Or, if here, ye deserters from
 "death! to whose corps you belong, why list into
 "so very foreign a service? Death, the more he is
 "forgot, the more formidable he grows. But how
 "could you forget him, who have seen him snatching
 "from your bosoms such numbers of your friends?
 "Has he so often knocked at the next door, and so
 "frequently shook his lance in vain? Will you drop
 "into the grave on your road to the ball? You,
 "who, one full age of man expired, commence a

" new, with all the wantonness of youth, by an an-
 " tichristian regeneration; a second birth into all
 " the foibles of a sensual life! Consider, what ten-
 " der reverence, what respect, mixed with compas-
 " sion, is paid to years owning their infirmities, and
 " supporting them, as they ought. But infirmities
 " of body dissembled, that those of the mind may
 " be the more indulged; a vicious mind stinging on
 " a jaded body into shame; this calls not only for
 " the scorn, but detestation, of mankind.

" Consider, Sirs! is there not some mistake? Do
 " not your minds, through disorder of the machine,
 " go too slow, and misrepresent the time of day?
 " else, how could men, who have not space sufficient
 " left between them and their graves, for life's won-
 " dered delusions to display their gay phantoms; who
 " can hardly hope to repeat to-morrow the farce of
 " to-day; still persist to be boys? young men, in-
 " deed, may see visions of what never shall come to
 " pass, and be ravished with them; but old men,
 " in their senses, cannot so much as dream dreams
 " of delight; such delight, I mean, as yours. What
 " delight can these gay scenes afford you? I should
 " think you should be more mortified than amused,
 " where you scarce can see a face that does not make
 " you look twenty years older than before. Hope
 " you any regard or affection among them? No;
 " despair even of toleration, but when these moderns,
 " for amusement, dip into you, as into chronological
 " tables, to know what happened before the flood:
 " find friends in coëvals, or despair.

" Indeed, my good friends, in one sense, most cer-
 " tainly you are strangers upon earth; why will you
 " not be so in the best? That you might be so in
 " the best, is, probably, the sole reason you are still

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" alive. Men in years, and the clergy, are the two
" natural supports of virtue and religion; that is,
" the two columns on which public welfare is built.
" And the first is the stronger, as there is less preju-
" dice against it. They both have higher obligations
" to be wise than other men: and if the world sees
" those higher obligations fail of their due effect,
" their consciences will sit easier under the neglect
" of their own. The clergy are volunteers; the aged
" are pressed by nature into the service of wisdom:
" and if they both desert, vice may triumph without
" a battle, and virtue fall without a mourner.

" Ye fine men of rank, and parts! a common sol-
" dier (your contempt, no doubt), shall reproach
" you. One of them, requesting dismissal from
" Charles Vth, gave this reason for it: *Inter vita ne-*
" *gotia extremumque diem oportet aliquod temporis inter-*
" *cedere.* Much more, *inter vita voluptates*, and our
" last hour. Will you go to your graves with your
" eyes shut, as Plutarch tells you the Spartans went
" to their beds in the dark? If so, as reasonable men
" in years enter their graves as a harbour, you will
" strike on yours as on a rock. You do not only
" expose yourselves, but your whole species. When
" they that have most reason to be wise, are the far-
"thest from it; it sinks the dignity of our common
" nature; brings, beyond all other enormities, a re-
" proach on mankind; and gives each individual, as
" a sufferer, as a sharer in the scandal, a just right
" not only of censure, but revenge.

" This will excuse my indignation at two noto-
" rious offenders; and therefore I shall dare name
" them. Who are they, but Sedbury, and Torris-
" mond? Their pictures have been partly drawn by
" the famous Seymour: I shall sketch the rest. These

“are two perfect heroes in this transgression; old
 “offenders in an offence, which, till old, they could
 “not begin; who join the gallantries of Paris to
 “the years of Nestor; who read a play-bill, and a
 “bill of mortality, with the same sensation, and
 “aspect; who can amuse themselves with a cath-
 “edral service; and go for an hour’s diversion to the
 “funeral of a friend!

“How many friends have they lost? that is, how
 “often has their confidence in the world been sha-
 “ken at the root? and give they still full proof of
 “their obstinate adherence to, and cordial incorpo-
 “ration with it? Has it not daily crumbled away in
 “their fingers? and will they hug it still? How can
 “their hearts still swell with those flattened bubbles
 “of idle joy, so often pricked by death?

“Ye two antediluvian youths! what greater folly
 “on earth than that of confounding seasons, and
 “not giving their respective appropriations to the
 “different periods of life! Nothing can be in credit,
 “that is out of character; and credit you affect, no
 “one more. If you would find it, let these gentle
 “hints, like the light touch of a magic wand, make
 “you shrink from your vernal bloom, and wither at
 “least to the decencies of fourscore; for I would
 “make you some allowance still.

“Know ye not that they who, in their wrinkled
 “decline, outdive in folly the temerities of youth,
 “and die immaturely at twice the age of man, are
 “void of shame from censure human and divine;
 “quite callous to God and men? Know you not
 “that such faults, after seventy, are as severely
 “judged by this world, as the next? To be born
 “like a wild ass’s colt, is natural; but not to live so,
 “and retain the colt’s tooth, when all the man’s art

call out. Time was, when to censure was
 "less ridiculous: but unless your expression part is
 "now dismissed, laughter is irresistible; as your
 "friend Horace assures you:

"*Sæva senescentem mature facies æquum; ne*

"*Pœcet ad extremum ridendus.*"

"Instead of surfeiting every public place with your
 "ungodly omnipresence, you should be reserved as
 "the great Mogul. A little self-annihilation would
 "be the wisest way even for your own vanity; for
 "the more we forget our age, the more we remind
 "others of it; and the younger we would appear, so
 "much older shall we look, in all eyes but our own.

"Yes, gentlemen! to preserve your dignity, retire
 "like eastern kings. And kings, indeed, you may
 "be, and glorious ones too, if you will be wise: for
 "Wisdom is the crown of old age, and the fear of
 "the Lord is its glory."

"Since the witchcraft of Pleasure is so strong as to
 "turn young men into old, by their infirmities; and
 "old into young, by their affectation and conceit; let
 "us look a little more narrowly into the perverse com-
 "position of that marvellous being, which we style a
 "man of pleasure: and make somewhat, if possible, like
 "an analysis of it.

The man of pleasure, (tho' I fear he never asked
 himself the question), of what nature, species, or
 rank in the creation conceives he himself to be? Does
 this yet unconstructed, undecyphered creature, consider
 himself as an immortal being? or only as a rational?
 or as a mere animal? If as an immortal, let him re-
 gard things eternal: if as a rational, let reason reign:
 if as a mere animal, let him indulge appetite, but
 not go beyond it; when appetite is satisfied, an ani-
 mal's meal is over: if as a composition of all three,

let it not be a confusion of them; let it be a composition; and order alone can preserve that name.

No; he is for neither of these. He is an immortal, without a sense of immortality. He is a rational dethroning reason; and an animal transgressing appetite: an unhappy combination, a wretched chaos of all, without the benefit of either: nay, a sufferer from each, because an abuser of all. They are not, as Heaven designed them, three parties in alliance for his happiness; but three conspirators, of his own making, against his peace.

For mark this immortal maze of human ruin; appetite, reason, and immortality violate, and are violated by each other. Subtle reason finds arts and arguments to tempt appetite beyond her bounds. Unbounded appetite, with stupefying sensuality, bribes reason to drop her dominion. Her dominion dropped, renders blind immortality regardless of things eternal: and they being disregarded, all immortality's boundless powers, and desires, devolve on things temporal; and devolved on them, with violence impel deposed reason, and riotous appetite, to monstrous lengths of extravagance, which had otherwise lain quite beyond both their power, and desire.

Thus stands the perplexed, and hitherto not unraveled case. The man, in his constitution, debauches the brute: the brute debauched, dethrones the man; the dethroned man, and debauched brute, join in rebellion against the immortal: the subdued immortal resigns to them its infinite powers and desires; which they exert to the destruction absolute of all three.

The man, if not in alliance with an immortal, never would have had an unbounded power and desire. If not in alliance with a brute, he never would have

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debauched them to mean and sordid ends; never would have confined them to things below: but being joined to both, and thro' perverseness and stupidity, rendering celestial immortality inglorious, and terrestrial brutality more brutal, he creates a far more miserable being than either of them apart could possibly have been. We may therefore congratulate the mere brute on his high prerogative, of being incapable of becoming such a monster of rationality as this. And the man of pleasure, if modest, will, for the future, give the wall to his horse. He, like Codrus, disguises himself, puts off his dignity to rush into danger; and happy for him, if he meets with nothing worse than death.

Reason, and immortality, the man, and the immortal, these only occasion the calamity; and the poor animal, an innocent ally, must suffer with them.

If your sister's favourites will contemplate themselves in any glass but their own, let them look in this true mirror; and though the features are somewhat monstrous, let them not disown them; since they may change them when they please; and they are pictured so minutely, that they may be the more inclined so to do. For what a hideous ruin of humanity is this! The world, after the deluge, a less melancholy sight. Such shocking footsteps sin leaves behind it, in nature animate, and inanimate. Reason, and virtue, are the sole beauty, and sole salvation of all. Through all her realms creation groans without it. The DEITY is all reason in his nature, conduct, and commands. The great, invariable, eternal alternative, throughout his creation, is, or reason, or ruin. To how many ears, in this happy metropolis, is this dismal news!

I was going to say, that reason is the sole basis of

happiness; but it is not. There are three kinds of happiness on earth, gradually less, and less. There is a happiness from the exertion of reason, where reason is given: this is the happiness of a man. There is an inferior happiness from the gratification of sense, where reason is denied: this is the happiness of a brute. And there is a calamitous happiness, where reason is suppressed, or abused; and this is the happiness of a wretch. You see then in what line of happiness our fine men must be content to rank.

I know your sister will call my analysis above, a labyrinth of sophistry. I will therefore give the man of pleasure's character in a manner less perplexed, and which she may probably censure as too plain; and may wish a clue were wanting to find the meaning.

He is one who, desirous of being more happy than any man can be, is less happy than most men are.

One who seeks happiness everywhere, but where it is to be found.

One who out-tolls the labourer, not only without his wages, but paying dearly for it.

He is an immortal being, that has but two marks of a man about him, upright stature, and the power of playing the fool, which a monkey has not.

He is an immortal being, that triumphs in this single, deplorable, and yet false hope, that he shall be as happy as a monkey when they are both dead; though he despairs of being so, while yet alive.

He is an immortal being, that would lose none of its most darling delights, if he were a brute in the mire; but would lose them all entirely, if he were an angel in heaven.

It is certain, therefore, that he desires not to be there; and if he not so much as desires it now, how can he ever hope it, when his day of dissipation is

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ever? And if no hope—what is our man of pleasure! a man of distraction and despair, to-morrow.

And who would buy to-day so dear, if it were so to be bought? as certainly it is not. Doubtless the true man of pleasure is he who preserves order in his compounded nature; and gives the animal, rational, and immortal, their respective dues. Who, as immortal, places in the Supreme Being his supreme delight; and, as rational, shunning superstitious austerities; and, as animal, too great indulgencies; admits of all secular enjoyments that are strictly consistent with his supreme. The true, and false man of pleasure are brothers; born of the same parent, viz. an inextinguishable love of delight: but so superior is one to the other, that, like the fabled brothers, Castor and Pollux, one may be said to be in heaven, the other on earth.

To be more explicit, I would gather three particular branches from this general root of happiness, and present them to your sister, as a specimen of the rest.

There is no man of pleasure without his Eve; no Eve without her serpent; no serpent without its sting. He that knows not the pure delight, and ever-growing tenderness of a chaste love, knows not the most that the fairest can bestow.

He that knows not the sound cordiality, and constant warmth, of a disinterested friendship, knows not the most that man can enjoy from man.

He that keeps not open a constant intercourse with Heaven by frequent servours of rational devotion, knows not a joy still sublimer than both.

What are the joys of vice, compared to these? What think their deluded admirers of a magnanimous triumph over strong temptation; of a sweet re-

poss in divine favour and protection; of an indefeasible right to life eternal? Is there not a certain grandeur, and solidity of happiness in this? Is not this better than ranging from the gaming-house to brothels; and with other little, fluttering, gilded, noxious, liquorish insects, to be fixing on every trifance for delight? Sons of Beelzebub the god of flies. I like not a certain modest faintheartedness in the friends and advocates of what is right. A Christian should let all see what an animation there is in Christianity, above all that the world may admire besides. Christianity should be the boast, as well as comfort of our hearts.

And now if we enquire after the cause which has brought us into that fool's paradise, on which I have dwelt so long, we shall see with what good reason Pleasure and Infidelity are joined together in my plan.

The Scripture ascribes the conquest of the world; that is, of its pleasures, to Faith, and is very copious in enumerating renowned instances of it. Were faith as prevalent in us, we too should prove Alexanders in the moral world. All agree, that several goods being proposed for our ultimate enjoyment, it is impossible in our natures not to chuse the best. All agree, that God's promises are better than any thing we can carve for ourselves: and all agree, that they are inconsistent with sin: so that he who will take out his portion in this life, must lose it in the next. What then, against our nature, and against our reason, hinders us from prosecuting our chiefest good?—Want of faith. All is resolvable into that alone.

For instance. Our temptations are of two kinds: from things that grieve, or things that please: the

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former sight, the latter allure us from our virtue. From poverty, pain, disgrace, or persecution, we fly to falsehood, or fraud, for escape. But these are not the immediate cause of it; but want of faith in God's promises, that "He will succour us in those exigencies; and deliver us in his good time; and, make all things work together for our good." On the other hand, when pleasure entices, and carries its point; we do not think those pleasures, be they what they will, preferable to heaven. But heaven is at a distance, and the soul is eager for present good. But why is heaven at a distance? for want of faith: for "faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." It attests the existence of that which is future; and makes "our conversation in heaven, though we are still in the body; associates us with angels, though in our solitude; and gives us greater joy in contemplation, than the world can give in hand." This is true, of the conduct of those heroes in Scripture had been impracticable! and they, like ourselves, were mere men. Thus Infidelity leads to Pleasure; and Pleasure confirms Infidelity; and both together consummate ruin.

These gentlemen seem to think that the world was made in jest; that there is nothing of moment, or serious in it. There is nothing else. There is not a fly, but has had infinite wisdom concerned, not only in its structure, but in its destination. And was man made only to flutter, sing, and expire? a mere expletive in the mighty work, the marvellous operations of the Almighty? Is joy their point? He that to the best of his power has secured the final stake, has a *fons perennis* of joy within him. He is satisfied from himself. They, his reverse, borrow all from

ON PLEASURE.

without. Joy wholly from without is false, precarious, and short. From without it may be gathered; but, like gathered flowers, though fair, and sweet for a season, it must soon wither, and become offensive. Joy from within, is like smelling the rose on the tree; it is more sweet and fair; it is lasting; and, I must add, immortal.

As, therefore, I have above offered these gentlemen three expedients for happiness; to persuade their acceptance of them, I shall now give three short maxims, which will sit light on their memories, and (I hope) in time, easy on their hearts.

He that will not fear, shall feel the wrath of Heaven.

He that lives in the kingdom of Sense, shall die into the kingdom of Sorrow.

He shall never truly enjoy his present hour, who never thinks on his last.

Let your sister, dear Sir, tell her grey pretty fellows, who are apostles to these Gentiles, that, if they can advance three maxims of greater truth, or three expedients of greater efficacy to happiness, than those above-mentioned, I am their convert; I exchange my Bible for Bolingbroke; and prepare for the ball: for, N. B. I am but fourscore.

With best wishes to you, and those you love, that is, all mankind; I am,

Dear Sir,

Most affectionately,

Yours.

L E T T E R III.

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LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,

THE contents of your Letter damp my joy in hearing from you. Even a good man's approaching death strikes us with some concern. I am sorry that the sting which Pleasure left in your unhappy friend, occasions so swift a decline. How naturally we lay hold on Heaven, when the world sinks under us, and will support our hopes no more ! The Piece of Devotion which you desire, you shall receive in my next. I cannot reflect on your friend's distress, and a noble youth whom I myself attended in his extremes, without dwelling still longer on Pleasure, which has cost the world so dear.

If Disease and Infirmary make us daily visits in the persons of our neighbours, and friends ; and Death, by the same affecting messengers, gives us frequent notice that he will be with us soon :

If, when Death arrives, all mankind, however divided before, unanimously close in one opinion, and one wish :

If libertine enjoyments hasten the approach, and heighten the dread, and embitter the consequences, of death :

If death is the single event sure, and virtue the single pursuit indefeasible ; and the divine favour the single point of absolute importance :

If that favour comes so cheap, that the very leavings (in time, care, and expence) of our real enjoyments, would go a great way in the purchase of it :

If the martyr's blood makes that purchase sure ;

and it is impossible that martyrdom, and voluptuousness, should share the same fate :

If the fate to be shared is endless ; and this life but as a moment to an age ; and an age not a moment to eternity ; and eternity as much ours, as the present hour :

If he, that is over-sold of the present, or high in expectation from any future hour, either knows not this world, or believes not in the next :

If all this is true ; that is, if it is day at noon : how happy, like your friend Eusebius, to strike early into the right path ; and not so long to slumber in indulgence, like the noble youth (of whom I shall soon speak), as to suffer the birth-day of our understanding to be the last day of our lives !

I told you, in a former letter, that I would give you your friend Eusebius's character at large ; not, to be sure, for your information ; but to place him in opposition to the men of pleasure : and so,

“ *Facem preferre pudendis :*”

Yes.

that their deformity may be set in a stronger light, for the benefit of those weak eyes, who cannot see a mountain without spectacles ; with whom a Centaur passes for a man : or, rather, who think a man of pleasure an extremely happy creature, and, with ancient astronomers, place the Centaur in heaven ; their Sagittarius there, or eternal hunter, ever aiming at Pleasure, and ever missing his mark. How very much, the character of Eusebius will plainly shew.

Men of pleasure, notwithstanding all the thorns they meet with in their flowery path, imagine all would enter it, but for want of taste, or spirit, or purse : Eusebius wants none of these. He wants

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not a taste for aught that can gratify either imagination or sense; that can make a connoisseur, or debauchee; but he is neither. Nor wants he a purse, or heart, to provide those gratifications. His purse is large; larger his heart; but not corrupt, and nobly wrong. He is young, gay, rich, expensive. So far he is with them; but will leave them soon, as the sun slides from under an eclipse. His riches widen the circle of his virtues. Their riches encrease the number of their crimes. There are two kinds of expence: in both, riches make themselves wings, and fly away. But widely different is their flight: in one they fly away as an eagle toward heaven; in their flight beautiful, and celestial in their end. In the other they fly away as an owl to the desert; ungacious and ill-omened, in their flight, and ending in the desert of ignominy and ruin.

Eusebius, though liberal to the demands of nature, rank, and duty; starves vice, caprice, and folly. These (the great cormorants of gold), he sends begging to their doors; they, as old intimates, welcome and embrace them all. And, if they have not thine the fortune of Eusebius, must soon be beggars themselves. While he, with one half they sink in a delirium, lifts beggars (beggars, I mean from fortune, not from folly) into the real comforts of life.

He too has his amusements; but not such as deaden, but revive: such as recover the relaxed tone of application; re-animate to new effort; and thus are essential, though pausing, parts of noble, well-judging industry. He starts not at a masquerade: nor thinks cards the books of the devil. But thinks all our diversions like long books, that were better epitomised; or, like the books of the Sybil, which, as they were lessened in number, rose in their price.

He, as well as they, has his parks, gardens, grottoes, cascades, statues, paintings, &c. but enjoys them more. Not because his are better than theirs, but because he is better than they. His paintings have beauties unborrowed from the pencil; and his statues in his eyes appear, like Pygmalion's, to live; though mere marble in theirs. His all-animating joy within gives graces to art, and smiles to nature, invisible to common eyes. Objects of sense, and imagination, for their greater power of pleasing, are indebted to the goodness of his heart. For as the sun is itself the most glorious of objects, and makes all others shine, so virtue itself is the greatest of pleasures, and of all other pleasures redoubles the delight.

He and they, though they both value riches, yet entertain widely different opinions about them. He considers a great fortune, as being put, by a kind Providence, into its honourable commission for doing much good. They consider it as a privilege, or, at least, as an excuse, for the contrary. He, surveying his ample arcades, and lofty domes, rejoices more in what benefits others, than what aggrandizes himself: rejoices more in considering how many mouths he has fed, than in considering how many eyes he has drawn. He triumphs in reflecting to what numbers he has been enabled, by the divine indulgence, to turn, without a miracle, those stones into bread. They, from their huge Babel-like buildings, contract a Babel-like pride, which turns, with regard to those beneath them, their hearts into stone. Such men, in effect, build downward; are the more ignoble, that is, the lower, for their height.

He thinks, that Heaven's rich donations imply in them some transfer to the public: they think they

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imply a transfer of the public homage to themselves. Instead of imagining his grandeur to be a demand on the public for its homage, he looks on it as the public's demand on him for bounty, and patronage, of which they have erected such proud promises; and by them raised so just an expectation. He thinks, that their riches (how strangely soever it may sound) run them in debt; and that not to benefit, is, to defraud.

His humility is equal to his magnificence; and as magnificence with humility speaks more regard for others than himself, it escapes envy, and ensures general applause. Their pride defeats their magnificence, and robs it of that applause, which is its single aim: for it is a great authority which tells us, "That pride is a tree which eats up its own fruit."

He knows (what they consider not) that splendid superiorities cannot be neutral, with regard to the characters of those who possess them; that, therefore, men possess them at their peril; that they must degrade, if they do not exalt them. That Heaven, which, in spite of different ranks, levels happiness, designed it as the peculiar curse of the great (if they deserve it) to be lessened by grandeur, and illustriously disgraced. That, if Apes and Crocodiles, men hurtful or ridiculous, inhabit superb piles, they must despair of being worshipped; though, but through a vain and keen appetite for public incense, they never had been built.

You see in how many points these men fall short of Eusebius in pleasure from expence; which, notwithstanding, is an article on which they pique themselves not a little. And give me leave to subjoin one more particular, which will affect them less than the former, though it ought to affect them most of all: his wealth has subterranean channels; blesses

unseen; and costs the relieved neither thanks, nor thanks. Not one prison have they opened; not one tear have they dried; which might speak in their favour, when their own begin to flow. The sorrows we have relieved are the faint support in our own. The best that can be said of their expenses, is, that they are an unwilling eulogium on those of your friend.

Sensual, of all our pleasures are the meanest; how low must a soul celestial stoop for them! Yet these, our thirsty sponges of sensuality, who suck up every drop of it, in or out of their way, though they take up the dirt with it, prefer to all the rest. And is these, if in any, they will venture to dispute his superiority: but for reasons, some already mentioned; more, most obvious; he is their superior in these. In pleasures intellectual, how far are they behind him! and then the moral, they are all his own. It is one of their minute, and meagre pleasures, professedly to decline them: and these are the supreme. Moral pleasures, though faintly, (in this imperfect state), yet truly taste of heaven; and what is more, insure that heaven of which they taste. And what an inestimable superiority is this? He that can think of death undismayed,

"Extremumque diem vitae inter munera ponit," *Lec.*

has more enjoyment, even in distress, than they in triumph, with every vain amusement turning reason out of doors, lest it should wound them with one whisper of the grave. On how many melancholy occasions in life should we be glad of an asylum to which to fly! How should we be transported with a thought that had infallible comfort in it! and that thought can be but one; and that one, it is the

constant toil, labour, nay boast, of these wise men to destroy.

Eusebius's love of pleasure is equal to theirs; whence then this vast inequality of happiness? He commands his pleasures; some he cultivates; some admits cautiously; others sends blushing away. Their pleasures domineer; scout them away on vilest errands; bid them throw their patrimony in the dirt of prostitution, or debauch; or dungeon them in midnight dens of fraud and destruction; and command them to whirl it away with a losing card, or stamp it to nothing with a desperate dye. What scaffolds of fatal execution are those guilty boards, where moments determine on fortunes for life, and rage and distraction threaten ruin eternal!

From this thralldom to their pleasures, this wretched impotence of heart, it is, that while he has but one, and that a most gracious master, they have as many tyrants as there are follies and vices in the world. Ten times a day they change their Pharaoh; and why? because his wages are so poor. They have it, indeed, in their power to change their master, but not to break their chain.

The Romans once pretended that they had a golden shield which fell from heaven: to secure it from theft, they laid it up among eleven others made of brass. This expedient had been unnecessary against their wisdom. They run away by choice with the eleven counterfeits; with a multitude of false intellectual pleasures, and leave the celestial, as of no value, to men of less understanding—Virtue, the delight of Eusebius, is a celestial shield against every evil of human life. Their pleasures are rather swords, that “pierce them through with many sorrows.”

The contrast how strong! their pleasures die in frigation, and are remembered with regret.—We survive the present actual enjoyment, and are as sweet in retrospect as in hand. Theirs lessen on repetition; his encrease: theirs create, and aggravate calamities; his avert most, and alleviate the rest: theirs hasten death, and heighten its horrors; his owe their perfection to his final hour, after having heightened, and lengthened, all the blessings of life. And what a wretch is that happiness, and what an idiot that wisdom, that can offer no comfort in the days of darkness, and the hours of death! In a word, their wretched joys flourish, like dismal weeping willows watered by a ditch: poor the figure they make; sordid and obscene the ground on which they stand: his flourish like cedars of Libanus, from the fountains of heaven; and are rooted in a rock, the rock of his salvation.

It is this superior ground on which he stands, which imparts that inimitable sweetness of air, aspect and deportment, which marks him among multitudes of the gayest, for the gay. They, like things gilt, have much to shew, much more to hide; are all darkness within. He, like a diamond, is transparent, and shines at heart. He looks, as if virtue, according to the wish of some sages, was at last become visible, and shone through him, in person, not precept, making a visit to mankind: and man is mended by looking on him.

Now, please, Sir, to observe, to what an astonishing degree that intellectual darkness, mentioned in my former letter, prevails in these men, that would outshine all the world. What is their chief boast? Why this, that they make the most of this life. Whereas the very fundamental difference between

that and Eusebius, is, That they make nothing of this world; because they design to make their all of it. He makes much of this world, because he holds it as little; because, ever having the sentiments, without the terrors, of death-bed, he never cuts off this life from the thoughts of the next; but sees his whole existence, in one unbroken thread, extended before him.

But before I dismiss your friend Eusebius, though he has made you a very long visit, I must take notice of one particular more. These gentlemen pique themselves on their epitome of all virtue and religion, benevolence. If they had it, it would confute most I have said, and make them very happy: for it may stand as a general maxim, that men are happy in proportion to their good-will: nor is it strange, that, to the greatest duty, should, by nature, belong the greatest reward. But their title to this virtue is not clear. The reason they so loudly pretend to it, is, because they know they have it not. The weakest side of a citadel is to be defended most. Eusebius, on his principles, must have universal good-will. Self-love obliges men to it; and his own happy state of mind inclines him the same way; for all are most kind to others, when most easy and pleased with themselves. On their principles, that this world is all; or, at least, all they will concern themselves about; self-love obliges them to the contrary: and their uneasiness in themselves seconds that obligation; so that you may as well expect to find an angel among the dissolute, as a friend. And, indeed, can any expect that they should love them better than their own souls? yet that would they do, if they cared for them at all.

But, instead of endeavouring to prove what needs

no proof, I shall present you with the picture of one of these great lovers of all mankind, if you will promise not to cut his throat; which picture, better than a Demosthenes, will prove my point. You will know whom I mean, when I tell you, that he is enamour'd of the charms, and deep in the mysteries of play. That is, he is so fond of riches, (which a good Judge tells us, "nemo bonus unquam concupivit"), of riches he is so over-fond, that he is quite miserable if denied a daily chance of being stripped to beggary. Greater professions of friendship can no man make than this arch-promiser: greater proofs of the contrary, can no man give. He never did a favour that proved barren to his own designs, but he sent a curse after it. All his kindnesses are artificial lies; if nothing is caught, they are pocketed again. "Hook him, or hang him," is a favourite maxim of his own coining. He smiles, indeed, with great complacency on a crowded levee of devoted friends; with no less than on a hand of good cards. And his hope from both is just the same; that is, to play them off, as to win his game. That done, if interest, or humour bids, he throws them aside as a foul pack, and calls for new; to shuffle, and cheat, and play tricks with, as before. He considers fools, as trumps, with which he is sure to win. If there are no fools to be taken in, he makes a pretty good hand of it with a knave of the right suit. If he is so unlucky as not to be blessed with either, he gives out, and, for that time, plays no more: for, without a good hand, a bad heart is unsupportable. But prosperity soothes remorse, and lays conscience asleep. This is one who knows the world; which generally means, one that knows not God. He never thought

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of that great, final stake, with regard to which, he, that honestly but desires it, is sure to win; and he, that plays foul the most dextrously, is sure to be undone. Such is Avidienus, such is that good man, who, as freely as eat his meal, could lay down his life for his friend.

But, in excuse for such men, I must own, that, for such as place their all here, there can be no shadow of social happiness but from deceiving, or being deceived. From deceiving, and so finding some account in their villainy; or from being deceived, and so finding some account in their folly. For real friendship amongst them is impossible: and, indeed, to hope a friend in any man, that is not truly his own friend, is absurd. From this account, it is evident, that the chief fountain of happiness is dried up in their hearts.

A wretch, almost smothered with all the reputed means of happiness, would, of all objects, be the most ridiculous, were it not the most melancholy too. Diogenes went about the city of Athens begging to the statues: being asked the reason, he said, he was learning to bear a repulse. These gentlemen should learn the same lesson; no statue can be deaser than most of their pursuits, when they ask real pleasure of them.

These are the men, who, while Providence lays the reins of free-will on their wanton necks, rush headlong into even unimportunate temptations. But when it shall put "its hook in their nose, and its bridle in their jaws;" when it shall drag them into the condition of your unhappy friend; or worse, when the tattered, convulsed body, shall be shaking out an unwilling soul, loth to leave it for a still worse habitation; then, oh! what a change!—It

places full before me the last hours of that noble youth I mentioned above. Last hours full of anguish ! how fit to be remembered by those that wish peace to their own. This is the funeral to which, in my first letter, I promised to invite your sister Sempronia, and her gay admirers ; Sempronia, who delights *psallere, et cantare, elegantius quam necesse est prole*. And what invitation more kind than that for which she may thank me for ever, when other entertainments end ? If they have their wine, this has its nectar. Its cup of salvation, pressed from that Vine, whose leaves heal the nations, and whose swelling clusters teem with eternal bliss. Funeral solemnities are more for the sake of the living than the dead. What a trifle that honour they receive from them, to the benefit we may reap from that affecting scene !

Oh ! Sir, how affecting ! It is still before my eyes. That wretched youth dies again ! Again, I am smitten with his death. It wounds me even in remembrance : what, then, the scene itself ! No words can paint it ; no time efface it ; I meet it in my dreams ; I shall bear it to my grave.

I am about to represent to you the last hours of a person of high birth, and high spirit ; of great parts, and strong passions, every way accomplished, nor least in iniquity. His unkind treatment was the death of a most amiable wife ; and his great extravagance, in effect, disinherited his only child.

But to my point. The deathbed of a profligate is next in horror to that abyfs, to which it leads. It has the most of hell that is visible on earth. And he that has seen it, has more than faith to confirm him in his creed. I see it now. For who can forget it ? Are there in it no flames, and suries ?—You know not, then, what a scared imagination can

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figure; what a guilty heart can feel! How dismal is it! The two great enemies of soul and body, sickness and sin, sink and confound his friend; silence and darken the shocking scene. Sickness excludes the light of heaven; and sin, its blessed hope. Oh! double darkness! more than Egyptian! Acutely to be felt!

How unlike those illuminated revels of which he was the soul? Did this poor, pallid, scarce-animated man dictate in the cabinet of Pleasure; pronounce the fashion; and teach the gayest to be gay? Are these the trophies of his Paphian conquests? these the triumphs to be bought with heaven? Is this he who smote all their hearts with envy at his pre-eminence in guilt? See, how he lyes, a sad, deserted outcast, on a narrow isthmus between time and eternity? for he is scarce alive. Lashed and overwhelmed on one side, by the sense of sin; on the other, by the dread of punishment! Beyond the reach of human help, and in despair of divine!

His dissipated fortune, impoverished babe, and murdered wife, ly heavy on him: the ghost of his murdered time (for now no more is left), all stained with folly and gash'd with vice, haunts his distracted thought. Conscience, which long has slept, "awakes like a giant refreshed with wine;" lays waste all his former thoughts, and desires; and, like a long-deposed, now victorious prince, on his bleeding heart, imposes, inflicts, its own. Its late soft whispers are thunder in his ears; and all means of grace rejected, exploded, ridiculed, is the bolt that strikes him dead; dead even to the thoughts of death. In deeper distress, despair of life is forgot. He lyes a wretched wreck of man on the shore of eternity,

and the next breath he draws, blows him off into ruin.

The greatest profligate is, at least, a momentary saint, at such a sight : for this is a sight which plucks off the mask of folly, strips her of her gay disguise, which glittered in the false lights of this world's mummery, and makes her appear to be folly, to the greatest fool.

How think we then ? Is not the death-bed of a profligate the most natural and powerful antidote for the poison of his example ? Heals not the bruised scorpion the wound it gave ? Intends not Heaven, that, struck with the terrors of such an exit, we should provide comfort for our own ? Would not he, who departs obdurate from it, continue adamant, though one rose from the dead ? for such a scene partly draws aside the curtain that divides time from futurity ; and, in some measure, gives to sight that tremendous, of which we only had the feeble report before.

Is not this then a prime school of wisdom ? are not they obliged, that are invited to this ? for what else should reclaim us ? The pulpit ? We are prejudiced against it. Besides, an agonizing profligate, though silent, out-preaches the most celebrated the pulpit ever knew. But, if he speaks, his words might instruct the best instructors of mankind. Mixed in the warm converse of life, we think with men ; on a death-bed, with God.

But there are two lessons of this school written, as it were, in capitals, which they that run may read. First, he that, in this his minority, this school of discipline, this field of conflict, instead of grasping the weapons of his warfare, is for ever gathering flowers, and catching at butterflies, with his un-

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ruined hand; ever making idle pleasure his pursuit; and pay for it his vast reversion; and, on opening his final account (of which a death-bed breaks the seal), shall find himself a beggar; a beggar past beggary; and shall passionately wish, that his very being were added to the rest of his loss.

Secondly, He shall find, that truth, divine truth, however, through life, injured, wounded, suppressed, is insuppressible, victorious, immortal: that, though with mountains overwhelmed, it will, one day, burst out like the fires of *Ætna*; visible, bright and tormenting, as the most raging flame. As now (oh! my friend!) I shall too plainly prove.

The sad evening before the death of that noble youth, whose last hours suggested these thoughts, I was with him. No one was there, but his physician, and an intimate whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said;

"You and the physician are come too late.—I have neither life, nor hope. You both aim at miracles. You would raise the dead."

Heaven, I said, was merciful.

"Or I could not have been thus guilty. What has it not done to bless, and to save me?—I have been too strong for Omnipotence! I plucked down ruins."

I said, The blessed Redeemer—

"Hold! hold! you wound me!—That is the rock on which I split—I denied his name."

Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, 'till the clock struck. Then with vehemence;

"Oh, time! time! It is fit thou shouldst thus strike thy murderer to the heart.—How art thou

" fled for ever!—A month!—Oh, for a single week!
 " I ask not for years. Though an age were mine
 " little for the much I have to do."

On my saying, We could not do too much : that
 heaven was a blessed place—

" So much the worse. 'Tis lost! 'tis lost!—
 " Heaven is to me the severest part of Hell!"

Soon after, I proposed prayer.

" Pray you that can. I never prayed. I cannot
 " pray—Nor need I. Is not Heaven on my side al-
 " ready? It closes with my conscience. Its severest
 " strokes but second my own."

His friend being much touched, even to tears, at
 this (who could forbear? I could not), with a most
 affectionate look, he said :

" Keep those tears for thyself. I have undone
 " thee.—Dost weep for me? that's cruel. What
 " can pain me more?"

Here his friend, too much affected, would have
 left him.

" No, stay. Thou still may'st hope ;—therefore
 " hear me. How madly have I talk'd! How madly
 " hast thou listened, and believed! But look on my
 " present state, as a full answer to thee, and to my-
 " self. This body is all weakness and pain ; but my
 " soul, as if stung up by torment to greater strength
 " and spirit, is full powerful to reason ; full mighty
 " to suffer. And that, which thus triumphs within
 " the jaws of immortality, is, doubtless, immortal—
 " And, as for a Deity, nothing less than an Almighty
 " could inflict what I feel."

I was about to congratulate this passive, involun-
 tary confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles
 of his creed, extorted by the rack of nature ; when
 he thus, very passionately :

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"No, no! let me speak on. I have not long to speak—My much injured friend! my soul, as my body, lyes in ruins; in scattered fragments of broken thought. Remorse for the past throws my thought on the future. Worse dread of the future, strikes it back on the past. I turn, and turn, and find no ray. Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, thou wouldst struggle with the martyr for his stake; and bless Heaven for the flames;—that is not an everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable fire."

How were we struck! yet, soon after, still more. With what an eye of distraction, what a face of despair! he cried out:

"My principles have poisoned my friend; my extravagance has beggared my boy; my unkindness has murdered my wife!—And is there another Hell!—Oh! Thou blasphemed, yet indulgent, LORD GOD! Hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me from thy frown."

Soon after, his understanding failed. His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or ever forgot. And ere the sun (which I hope has seen few like him) arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont expired.

If this is a man of pleasure, what is a man of pain? How quick, how total, is the transit of these Phaetontiades! in what a dismal gloom they set for ever! how short, alas! the day of their rejoicing! For a moment they glitter, they dazzle. In a moment, where are they? Oblivion covers their memories. Ah! would it did! Infamy snatches them from oblivion. In the long-living annals of infamy their triumphs are recorded. Thy sufferings still bleed in

the bosom (poor Altamont!) of the heart-felt friend: for Altamont had a friend. He might have had many. His transient morning might have been the dawn of an immortal day. His name might have been gloriously enrolled in the records of eternity. His memory might have left a sweet fragrance behind it, grateful to the surviving friend, salutary to the succeeding generation. With what capacities was he endowed, with what advantages, for being greatly good! But with the talents of an angel, a man may be a fool. If he judges amiss in the supreme point, judging right in all else but aggravates his folly; as it shews him wrong, though blessed with the best capacity of being right.

Such, so fatal, when abused, are the greatest blessings of Heaven. Heaven grant his agonies were an expiation of the past; not a presage, and sad specimen, of the future! That his surviving companions and admirers may never suffer the same, give me leave to speak to them, while this affecting object is (or might be) in their sight.

"Ye staunch pursuers of pleasure, opening in full
"cry on its burning scent! who run yourselves out
"of breath, health, credit, estate, and often life,
"after that you cannot catch! for a moment, slacken
"your speed, and cool the fervor of your chase.
"It is a friend that calls, and he is his own, that
"hears.

"If there is a scene on earth, in which you can
"find greater advantage, than in that to which you
"have been invited, do not come; if there is not,
"indulge me in a few words, which may not be
"soon forgot: at least, they will recur to your
"thoughts, they will recur to your feeling hearts,

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"when your present jovial chace is over; when
 "pleasure is no more.

"It will be grateful to your friend deceased, whom
 "you were always willing to oblige, if, with his ac-
 "complishments, you remember his faults; for then
 "you will not forget your own; but read, in his
 "deep distress, a strong caution against them. Ask
 "for the rock on which he split; a solid basis
 "for your safety? Has he not well-marked where
 "mischief lyes? See you not the wreck of that gal-
 "lant first-rate? or rather, is he not a beacon, lighted
 "up by kind Providence, to guide you safe through
 "the dangerous voyage of human life?"

"He once, as you now, imagined himself, in this
 "life, immortal. Was he not mistaken? He has ta-
 "ken his final flight; whither, who can tell? If you
 "continue yours in the same fatal track, who is he
 "that cannot tell where the folly must end? Smit-
 "ten, transfix'd, when most secure, from the most
 "towering heights he dropped, at once, into depths
 "of distress, not to be fathomed by man. In gaiety
 "of heart defy not the danger. Are there not more
 "arrows in the same quiver? and are not you as
 "fair and tempting a mark? more tempting, if un-
 "admonished, and mounting still over his forgotten
 "tomb. And whom dare you tempt? an Archer
 "that never missed his mark.

"But you, from your gay pavilion, embowered in
 "roses, see no threatening prospects; no dangers of
 "death.—Oh, Sirs! Death delights to ly hid in
 "thickets of roses! How often the gayest fall first in
 "his snare! yet even this is too gentle, too mild, to
 "answer the good-will of Heaven; it cannot keep
 "the world in awe.

"What uncommon fortitude is needful to bear

" prosperities unhurt? It is now sunshine with you;
 " and you think all is well. It is the season of in-
 " dulgence—but seasons will change. You, that are
 " now all social comfort, gathered close in glad do-
 " sters, and (like embodied birds of passage, bound
 " for new climes) on your impatient wing for new
 " delights! what will you do, when each of you, se-
 " vered from the rest, an unexperienced, unexpected
 " recluse, lyes sorely pained; dreading worse; none
 " to converse with, but the two greatest strangers,
 " his own heart, and Him who made it; and neither
 " at peace with him? Say, ye strangers to care, and
 " abounders in mirth! what will he do, when he
 " finds himself still subsisting in a state, where none
 " of those pleasures, for which alone he wished to
 " subsist, can possibly any longer subsist with him!
 " when the dark matter at the centre will not be
 " more foreign to him, than that which now beats
 " high in his pulse, and flushes in his cheek; and
 " stings him on to schemes, that laugh at such lec-
 " tures as these? when he finds himself led, by the
 " soft hand of Pleasure, to those dismal gates, which
 " she herself will never, never, never enter?

" Consider, my good friends! you still retain the
 " name of Christians; and have heard of the Scrip-
 " tures. To speak their language, if Christians are
 " racers, you have not yet started: if warriors, your
 " armour is not yet on: if labourers in the vineyard,
 " you pluck down the vine, and get drunk with the
 " grapes: if watchmen, your nap is not yet over.
 " There is no man, but in some part of life, either
 " stung by self-moved conscience, or alarmed by some
 " providential event, as out of a long idle dream,
 " starts at once into his senses. The longer the
 " dream, the greater his surprise and pain; and, if

"he rode to the last, the pain and horror (as too
"well has been proved) is inexpressible.

"Cannot that awful truth interrupt your sum-
"mer? He sleeps sound indeed, at whose ear a friend's
"knell shall knock in vain. But setting friendship
"aside; granting that, with men of your cast, a
"friend dead is a friend annihilated; ask, I beseech
"you, pure self-interest one question; have you no
"concern in this death? Is it nothing to you?—Oh,
"much! very much! it cannot stand neuter. It is
"big with good or ill. It must hasten your amend-
"ment, or heighten your offence. Henceforth, the
"same crimes are sevenfold guilt.

"Have you never consulted the workings of na-
"ture? Have you never been surprised with a seri-
"ous feeling of heart? When I stand, tho' a stran-
"ger, on the verge of another's grave; when I see
"the shaken mould take possession of human pride;
"and hear the solemn sound of *dust to dust*; what
"swelling of soul, but instantly subsides; what salu-
"tary thoughts, but, at once, it inspires? The grave
"of one unknown, and dying a common death,
"would have this effect: what then, the grave of a
"friend, and of our own character; and that not
"good; and dying of the follies in which we live;
"and with admonitions in his mouth, and horrors
"in his heart? What heart impregnable to such an
"assault? what thunder equal to such a groan? It
"would echo for ever in a penetrable ear! in a pe-
"netrable heart there would be wrought a mighty
"change!

"For see you not the mighty force that is implied
"in this mercy? Heaven trusts not to your faith;
"but gives sensible proof of what you have to fear.
"And could it do more? Would a miracle suffice?—

“ You have it in a mercy so little deserved. If danger can alarm you, you, now, are alarmed. If nothing can alarm you, nothing can save.

“ I should grieve to have said too much. Yet, have I said too much, if my words serve only to render more inexcusable that imprudence which they labour to remove. Rather know your danger, and embrace the plank (though not of cedar) which I throw out for your escape. Our fondness for good, shuts our eyes on evil; we scarce allow it existence before it is felt. But, remember, we live in a most mutable scene; and have the fear of to-morrow before your eyes. Not the keenest discernment can ken through the second of a minute. To keep within the reach of mercy, is the grand concern, and supreme blessing of human life.

“ My converted ! or condemned !

“ Farewell.”

Thus, dear Sir, I speak to these gentlemen. I wish they do not rather chuse to show their parts, than their penitence; and criticise my speech, instead of their own conduct. If so, they demonstrate how very great occasion there was of it; though it proves ineffectual.

Most Yours.

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LETTER IV.

ON

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L E T T E R IV.

DEAR SIR,

YOU seem to think, in your last letter, that our age is so far gone, as to be past recovery. I hope not. Aviola, a consul in the time of Gordian, revived on his funeral pile. I will not despair, but that British virtue, now, like the Phœnix, dying in its sweets, may start up from its ashes, and re-assume its former glory. I shall therefore proceed a little farther.

I grant, that the man of pleasure, as well as the good man, has his joy. But their joys are very different. They differ not only in their objects, but their kind; which is as yet a secret to them; and, possibly, to you. Joy from temporals, is a terrestrial joy: and, like all things terrestrial, has a dreg in it. If you observe your own heart, you will find, that joy from temporals has ever somewhat of a gay inquietude, a disturbed and tumultuous delight. Like some liquors, all in an unquiet ferment, and confusion, while they sparkle and smile. Joy from eternals, joy, I mean, on spiritual accounts, (*viz.*) *Mens conscientia recti*; or, a delightful hope of immortality; or an humble persuasion of divine favour, &c. this joy is celestial, and, like a fine calm summer's evening, is undisturbed, placid, and serene. The first is a passion, and that in the strictest sense; we suffer from it, as well as enjoy. Nay, some have suffered from it even to death. The latter seems to be, or to resemble an inspiration, in which the divine cause takes away, or supercedes our human infirmity. There-

fore, by our church, most properly styled the *peace of God*. Nor let Centaurs imagine, that this peace is occasioned by the smallness of the joy: no, "It passeth all understanding;" and is, strictly speaking, a specimen, an actual part of heaven.

For, indeed, the supreme happiness, and misery, of rational beings, through all variation of circumstances, and through every period of their existence, is of a piece, or of the same kind; though, perhaps, in no two periods of it, of the same proportion, or degree. Therefore, heaven and hell, how distant soever some think them, are really, though not fully, on earth. Where-ever, and whenever, their causes, that is, virtue and vice, exist, they will exist, in a measure correspondent to them. What then are the good and bad, but the wretched and happy? He, whose soul reposes on his firm trust in God, like the halcyon that builds on the waves, if storms arise, may be tossed, but not endangered. Or, grant the worst, those tumultuous billows that devour others, rock him to rest eternal.

When the good man lies down to rest, no fear from the dangers of the night break through his strong confidence in the divine protection. When he awakes, his first thought lays hold on heaven; which gives, through the consecrated day, such a sweetness of aspect and deportment, such a force and firmness, to his felicity; that we may venture almost to say, "He cometh forth as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoiceth, as a giant to run his course."

The man of pleasure has his little clouds at the brightest, the course of his happiness is retarded by a straw; and any considerable, scarce considerable, accident puts it quite to death. Not only the ne-

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calamities, or inconveniences, but the decorations, and superfluities of life, are vital to his sickly felicity. In any of them he may receive a deep or deadly wound. Whereas they are mere extrefcences to the good man's happiness; and he has no more feeling in them than in his hair, or his nail: nay, his happiness is of so strong a constitution, that it can stand all calamities unhurt: nor quits its serenity on the confines of the grave; which the man of pleasure but ill retains in the sunshine of life.

Of which strange inferiority one cause is very obvious. When all our hopes and fears are confined within this narrow scene, what an insupportable importance, what a tyranny over our passions does this give it! what demigods does it make our superiors, who can bestow what we most value! We tremble before them. What mountains does it make of little things, because the greatest in our inventory! we turn pale, sometimes die at their loss. But, the first moment we take GOD for our protector, and his precious promises for our chief portion, our superiors, even kings, shrink to men; and crowns imperial lose their lustre. Little things are little, and leave our hearts at rest. As a taper to the sun; such the sun to the "glories which shall be revealed." Looking to the close of the drama, we resume our native dignity; nor are longer over-awed on the stage, by our fellows; or, perhaps, our inferiors, behind the scene; nay, sometimes, on it too: when, like poor Alzamor, they are forced to change their plume for the warm cap of sickness; and are unbuttoning their buckles on the bed of anguish, terror, and death.

And must this, one day, be the case? after having run the gauntlet of disappointing, painful pleasures; and, for some years, being afflicted with delights;

to drop unregarded, unlamented, infamous, into punishment far greater, for the punishment they have already undergone—Of human happiness what a dismal account is this! yet this is the true. Let us, therefore, enquire if it is not worse than they deserve.

Our men of pleasure affect much being men of honour too; that is, they are as proud, as they are dissolute: or, in other words, they will not stoop to mean and little vices; they deal only in great. They scorn to pick a pocket; but triumph in cutting a throat. If their immaculate honour is violated by word, look, or thought, then they trample all the laws of religion, justice, and humanity without remorse. My enquiry will join the man of honour, and the man of pleasure together. But how shall I enquire? how shall I know the heart of these men? and that only can inform me right. Let us then consider what these mens prayer would be, if they prayed at all. For what is a prayer, but addressing to some superior power, the real desires of our hearts?

Thus, then, I will shew you an exact picture of their hearts. There was so masterly a copy of a capital picture of Julio Romano, taken by one of his scholars, that he swore it was his own original drawing. I hope so to copy their hearts, that they shall imagine, that it is not I, but themselves, that speak. The desires of their hearts, if cloathed in words, would run to the following purpose.—But, first, this caution: let not that offend pious ears, which passes in an impious heart; and which, for the sake of piety (though, perhaps, not without some shock to it), is drawn out into light.

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The PROFLIGATE'S PRAYER.

O THOU! whose omnipotence is but a second
 attribute, an able servant to thy delight.
 Thou great fountain of pleasure! as such I adore
 thee. Pleasure alone makes me devout; and let
 devotion advance my pleasure: for I am not more
 devout than modest; I ask not, yet, for heaven.
 Give me my heaven on earth. Let Mahomet's pa-
 radise descend, and bless me on this side the grave.
 Let my honour too shine before men; and let none
 see my heart,—but Thee. *Nollem peccatis, et frau-*
ditibus objice nudem. Give my lusts a long and prospe-
 rous reign over me; and let not religion approach
 to hurt me. Lead me into temptation, and give
 me strength to comply with it. And deliver me
 from all evil, that may mar my delights. Let me
 be (as I have been) a brute while I live, and an
 angel (if angels there are) when I die.

Is the good man shocked at this? Yes; and the
 profligate too. Few know the foulness of their own
 hearts. A famous modern, when in age he had lost
 his understanding, passing by a looking-glass, cry'd
 out in compassion, "Poor old man!" not knowing
 it to be himself. Thus the profligate, at sight of this
 mirror, equally ignorant, no doubt, will cry out in
 surprise, "Horrid wretch!" I answer, therefore, to
 the question above, viz. Is it not worse than they
 deserve? That men of pleasure, themselves being
 judges, deserve the worst.

In contrast to this (and sure it wants an antidote),
 accept that Piece of Devotion you desired on your
 friend's account; and may it prove of some little
 service to him.

DEVOUT THOUGHTS

OF THE

RETIRED PENITENT.

Y ES, blessed, ever blessed be the divine indulgence for this. How wanted, how welcome, this asylum! this recess! Here earth holds its peace; and Heaven's voice can be heard; Heaven's voice, if we listen, ever speaking in the human heart. Here let me commune with my so long anxious heart, which has frequently called on me for an audience, and found me pre-engaged. Or else, the rude world broke in on our conference, and fatally push'd it off 'till a farther day. Though (shocking to consider!) a depending eternity often chid my delay.

While the noise of the world beats its drums in our ears, and its bustle and hurry throws its dust in our eyes, who can hear the soft whispers of conscience, or read the strong demands of reason, the written in capitals on the composed and disenchanted heart? I now read, hear, and tremble. I tremble at that in which I once triumphed. I blush at that of which I once was vain. Oh, Pleasure! Pleasure! what art thou? The death of reason. And with reason dies the whole heaven, as well as character, of man.

The cloud now a little broken, which wrapped me up in night, look round, my soul enlarged; and say, where, or what am I? An immensity around me! an eternity before me! a shadow, my pleasure! a moment, my time! a vapour, my life! And shall



'a moment, shade, vapour, engage all my love?
'engage all my thought? Shall it bid an angel from
'heaven wait my better leisure? bid the great Fa-
'ther of angels defer his call 'till to-morrow?—
'What, O my soul! if he should call no more!—
'Good GOD! if he should call no more! if He
'should leave thee to thyself!—Where, then, is
'hope? where, then, is man?

'Man, desperate man, the first moment he sets up
'for himself, and impatient of controul, takes the
'rein into his own mad hands; the first moment he
'is at liberty, he is the greatest of slaves. How
'shackled! how harrafs'd! how starved! In the midst
'of his riots, what a famine of joy? None can be
'wise for time, that are fools for eternity. Dreadful
'independence! the first moment man quits hold of
'his Creator, he drops, in distraction, and ruin! how
'unfathom'd his fall!

'Out of that deep, I call unto thee, O LORD!
'LORD, hear my voice. Dissolve the charm that ties
'me down to delights trifling, terrestrial, infernal;
'and give me wings to rise into day, and reach the
'things that belong to my peace. Where is the
'creature which thou hast made? Where is the heart
'which thou hast given? This sink of pollution!
'this nest of all vices! it could not come from thee.
'No, I have snatched it out of thy blessed hand,
'and let it fall in the mire. What is it to me, that
'thy mercy is over all thy works, since I am not what
'thou hast made!

'I have slept on a precipice, and dreamed I was
'in heaven. Slept on its very brink; though ven-
'geance frowned over me, and flames roared be-
'neath. What horrors awake me! what a gulph
'lies before me! what mercy has saved me! Where

* Had I been, had I died yesterday! Oh, let this load,
 * this mountainous load, on my heart, sink me lower,
 * and lower still, in adoration that I live! Had I felt
 * these pangs before,—before I had been reclined
 * —Thou that bearest up the pillars of the earth,
 * support my spirits!—Where had I been, if yester-
 * day had been my last? Where—oh where!—And
 * eternal too!—Eternal!—O LORD, GOD AL-
 * MIGHTY! could thy thunder shake me more?

* Thou glorious GOD, who makest the thunder!
 * let me climb above creation; and soar into thoughts
 * of thee.—How I wander up and down, bewildered
 * and benighted, thro' the boundless of such a con-
 * templation? Where, what, who, how art thou?
 * Source of all being! Centre of all good! great An-
 * cient of days! before the birth of time! beyond the
 * comprehension of angels! filler of immensity! who
 * lookest down on the highest, and the lowest dost
 * support!—support even me.

* Support me while I labour at some idea of my
 * GOD—but I labour in vain. Thou most obvious,
 * and most occult! most present, and most absent of
 * beings! how much of thee is enjoyed! how little
 * of thee is known? I am in thee, yet cannot find thee.
 * I can neither go from thee, nor to thee. Clouds,
 * and thick darkness are thy pavilion! wonders pas-
 * sing wonders, through the moment of time, and the
 * immense of eternity, guard, and aggrandize thy
 * tremendous throne!

* Before such a judge, O my soul! art thou to plead
 * thy cause; to pour out thy deep sorrows, and deeper
 * sins; to tremble out thy complaint! Oh! let me
 * annihilate myself before him. Nor wretch, nor
 * man, nor angel, is any thing in his sight, till he is
 * nothing in his own. Who, LORD! ever thought

And thou, and was not spoused? and give me
 a name to add, who, LORD! ever prayed to thee
 (as he ought), and was not blessed? For which in-
 finite mercy, from the first thrones in heaven, to
 the meanest worm on earth, be paid all homage,
 praise, and adoration; constant, profound, ardent,
 and eternal!

PART II.

Are they that pray, blessed?—But what is that
 to me? Darest thou pray? To whom is prayer ad-
 dressed? Oh! how dreadful in majesty! more
 dreadful in vengeance! dreadful to the blessed
 above! more dreadful to man! more still to the
 sinner! what then to the dearest in sin? May not
 I then say (as is said, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, of
 thy blessed Self), 'Hell is open before me; destruc-
 tion hath no covering?' Where then shall I fly?
 I cannot fly from thy presence. I dare not stand
 in it. Should I sink to the centre, I am still in thy
 sight. Even darkness detects me! even flight brings
 me nigh! Oh! Thou that dost light the sun as a
 taper, or tread it out as a spark! why still in be-
 coming, a wretch ever destined to pain? oh! let me be
 nothing; or let me be thine.

And what a nothing, indeed, am I? What a
 nothing, compared, is man!—Thou that inhabitest
 eternity! my foundation is in the dust. LORD
 most holy! I was conceived in sin. God! most
 mighty! what weaker than man? Great! Holy!
 Mighty! Three persons and one GOD! Creator!
 Redeemer! Sanctifier! three benefactors, and one
 Being! with what indignation must thou behold a
 wretch of such complicated guilt? a sinner to thee,
 to the public, and himself?

And dare I then approach? The presumption
 how great!—But greater to forbear. To sin is
 bad; to despair is fatal. Oh! most merciful Jesus!
 what refuge, but in thee! Yet dare I not meet thy
 face: I come trembling behind thee. If I touch
 but the hem of thy garment, I shall be whole. Even
 dogs may eat of the crumbs that fall from their
 master's table.—For that bountiful grant, what
 adoration is due! with prostration profound, I can-
 not but adore.—What adoration is equal? I can-
 not adore aright: or could I, I'm unworthy to lift
 an eye to thy throne. My incense has no odour,
 my anthem no praise.

But thou, LORD, wide as the arch of heaven,
 dost extend thy compassionate arms to receive a re-
 turning world. As the sands of the sea are thy
 mercies, and (with horror let me speak it) my trans-
 gressions. I have looked on an unfeeling heart, as
 a quiet conscience; on a multitude of sinners, as an
 apology for sin; and on the fashion of the world,
 as a repeal of thy laws. I have been thankless for
 what thou hast most bountifully given; senseless of
 what thou hast more bountifully promised; provo-
 king under the greatest obligations; peevish, and
 impatient under the smallest evils; riotous under
 thy judgments; and by thy blessings most unblef-
 sed: I turned them into poison; and by my pro-
 sperity was undone.

I have studied iniquity as a science: been vain
 of distinction in it; and ashamed of my duty; I
 have blushed at the glance of a man, and a man
 most mistaken; and set my face as a flint against
 reason, and against thee; I have even borrowed in-
 fidel scraps for the credit of the day; and run in
 debt for destruction: time given for repentance, I

signed over to folly; and made the divine mercy
 a promoter of sin. Nay, I have sinned even be-
 yond my power. What schemes have I laid, which
 thy goodness disappointed! How many crimes have
 I committed, which never came to pass!

With such overflowings of ungodliness I quenched
 thy blessed Spirit. I have trod, with thy divine
 laws, thy precious blood, under foot. All this,
 LORD! thou knowest; and yet I still live: all this
 thou hast seen; and yet hast thou held thy peace.
 Thou hast shortened thine arm; and curbed ven-
 geance in air; though called for (if daring can call
 for thy vengeance) to fall on my head.

How long, LORD! hast thou forborne me? And
 forborne when thine arrows went abroad; though
 I stood in the first rank of offenders; nor ever lift-
 ed up the shield of devotion; quite naked in sin.
 My less vicious companions fell frequent around
 me; and dismal was their fall. I washed off its
 memory in the next welcome debauch; and the
 just cause of remorse but redoubled my guilt. By
 admonitions unadmonished, by thy mercies unfor-
 gotten, by my own sentiments unawed, by my own
 conviction unconvinced, I censured their conduct,
 and trod on in their steps. I deplored their sad exit,
 and passed on to my own; because spared, when
 most obnoxious, I thought myself immortal. In
 every path of pleasure, in every flight of ambition,
 what gay, sanguine multitudes of these torn after
 me, and in every promise of life to be placed be-
 fore me, have I seen rise, bloom, triumph, languish,
 decay and die! What a mystery of mercy is this!
 And what a miracle of madness am I! Amid this
 mighty field of slaughter, am I still alive?—While
 I doubt if I still live, I live on in my crimes. Nay,

‘ my very repentance increases the number : repen-
‘ tance so languid ; so far short of my guilt !’

PART III.

‘ Lord ! from that stupendous height, towards
‘ which the Cherubims lift up an eye in vain, bow
‘ down thine ear and hear.—O LORD ! hear me
‘ not. For what have I to plead ? what excuse to
‘ cover, what palliation to soften my guilt ? Can
‘ my confession of sin weigh aught in my favour ?
‘ I fear, not a grain : for wherefore have I confessed
‘ my transgressions ? because I could not conceal
‘ them. Thou knowest even those that are un-
‘ known to myself. But then, LORD ! I have been
‘ tempted.—Yes ; and I have courted temptation.
‘ Frail nature has seduced me.—And have I not
‘ indulged my seducer ? Public example bore hard
‘ on me.—And I rejoiced in that excuse. I have
‘ sinned with my fathers.—True, but I have sin-
‘ ned beyond them. What age for indulgence has
‘ so loosened the rein ? and who, in such an age,
‘ has rushed farther in ill, than the wretch at thy
‘ feet ?

‘ But is there nothing in counterbalance ? no
‘ dawnings of good ? no pretensions, at least, to vir-
‘ tue, to lighten the loaded scale ? Yes ; I have been
‘ an advocate for virtue—that I might remove all
‘ obstructions in vice. I have gone to thy temple—
‘ but left my heart behind. Nay, I have prayed—
‘ but wished not what I asked. I have aimed at
‘ humility—out of pride. I have given—but with-
‘ out charity. I have been kind, the very kindest of
‘ men—to gain the power of being cruel, as the most
‘ malignant of foes. My devotion to Thee has been
‘ absolutely declined ; yet never have I repented,

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but of omissions in guilt : nor ever had a darling joy, but what is the parent of my present grief.

On searching my own heart, that abyss of corruption, I find there is hardly a virtue which my hypocrisy has not worn, as a mask ; hardly a vice which my presumption has not acted under it. By these abandoned means bringing into discredit virtue of others the most sincere ; and making more heinous my own deepest guilt : to the public a scarce less pernicious pest, than a fatal assassin to myself. Thus, Lord ! all my pleas but inflame my indictment ; and seeking excuses, but discovers new crimes.

But, as I discover new crimes in myself by my awakened reflection ; by the gift of thy grace, I discover new goodness, new glories, new wonders, in Thee. I have lived in darkness, in the shadows of eternal death. I wrapped myself up in the world. I saw nothing ; but what had been better unseen, what made me blind to Thee. But now thy divine attributes break in upon me, like the morning ; and awake me to thy presence. I see Thee in every thing. And seeing, I adore. And adoring, tremble.

Thine attributes, at once, all lighten upon me ; and strike me, like him of Tarsus, thy less persecuting foe ; they strike me to the dust. Thy most awful omnipresence ; thy most incomprehensible glory ; thy most unbounded wisdom ; exquisite justice ; and ineffable goodness ! goodness, how ineffable ! And to me, LORD ! to me insupportable. That chief cause of my confusion ! severe upbraider of my conduct ! and terrible aggravation of my guilt ! If thy goodness thus pains me ; what then will thy vengeance ? When thy vengeance awakes

‘(cover me, O ye mountains!) when thy vengeance
 ‘awakes—Oh! mercy! mercy! mercy!—Thou
 ‘mighty to save! Oh! have mercy upon me!

‘And mercy thou wilt have, thou Father of all
 ‘mercies! of mercy redundant, inexhaustible source!
 ‘Thou wilt not condemn him, who condemns him-
 ‘self; who trembles at his own tribunal; who is
 ‘scarce struck with more horror at vengeance, than
 ‘at guilt. At such guilt! and to such a Master!
 ‘whose bounties enabled me so signally to sin; and
 ‘who, my sin so provoking, so long over-looked.

‘But I repent. LORD! I repent—Yet how dry
 ‘are these eyes! how hard is this heart! Strike thou
 ‘the rock, and the waters flow. Let not him, who
 ‘groans under his transgressions, groan under thy
 ‘displeasure. Thou giver, guider, lover, yea, buyer,
 ‘of souls! and, at what a price! who dost hear the
 ‘very thoughts of the wounded at heart! hear, pity,
 ‘spare! Nor let the LORD be angry, if I presume to
 ‘add—Oh! spare thy paternal tenderness; oh spare
 ‘it from its aversion, its strange work. Vengeance
 ‘is an alien to thy most amiable nature. Ruin is
 ‘subversion of thy most glorious scheme.

‘Though common sense has deserted me, and
 ‘legion possessed me; though I have contradicted
 ‘my own reason, and fought my own heart, which
 ‘stood in defence of thy laws; tho’ I have struggled
 ‘hard for madness, and taken ruin by force; yet
 ‘let not compassion be quite a stranger in Heaven.
 ‘Let not thine anger burn for ever. Wherefore is
 ‘the LORD angry? Because I am a sinner? What
 ‘else canst thou forgive? Because my sin is great?
 ‘If pardoned, the greater thy glory. Thy servant
 ‘is wicked: but still a servant. Thy son a prodigal:
 ‘but still a son. Tho’ a son’s duty has been want

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'ing in me: lose not Thou, boundless Love! all
 'the bowels of a father. Am not I the work of thy
 'hand? Do not despise it. An image of thy maje-
 'sty? Do not blot it out. The price of thy blood?
 'Oh! cast it not away. Shall things incompatible
 'combine to my destruction? Can I be related to
 'ruin, and to Thee? Let it be thy blessed pleasure
 'to reclaim, not to destroy me: if destroyed, thy foe
 'will triumph: if reclaimed, there is joy in Heaven;
 'and ten times ten thousand will sing praise round
 'thy throne.'

PART IV.

'But if I am pardoned, who then can be punished?
 'What stains can condemn, if an Æthiop escapes?
 'The regions of darkness are part of thy creation;
 'and horrors infernal were not made in vain. My
 'crimes, in themselves, how great! as committed in
 'defiance of Infinite Majesty, they are greater still.
 'What then shall I say? To what shadow of excuse
 'shall I fly?—Pardon, LORD! the weakness of my
 'reason, if I judge, or rather hope, amiss: thine In-
 'finite Majesty seems to plead for me. Fain would
 'I find an advocate in that: in that very cause,
 'which most heightens my guilt.

'For what, my Lord! am I? a poor complex of
 'listlessness and vanity: the very centre of infirmities;
 'a combination of all causes, that can call for thy
 'compassion. Frail flesh, and fleeting spirit! a moth!
 'a worm! a flower of the field! to day, and not to-
 'morrow! at morning, and not at night! not master
 'of a moment; not a match for a breeze! a dream!
 'a vapour! a shadow! a thing of nought! passing
 'through daily doubt and danger, toil and trouble,
 'into trodden dust and ashes!

' Such am I ! such was I made ;—and made by
 ' Thee : and now, LORD ! wilt Thou make bare
 ' arm almighty against me ? wilt thou lift up a bulwark
 ' that can crush creation, against its meanest worm ?
 ' (Oh ! pardon what distress compels me to plead)
 ' thine Infinite Majesty declares against it : that
 ' rescues the sinner, though it enhances the sin. Does
 ' not my meanness disarm thy might ? Is not the
 ' greatness of the offended, the offender's defence ? I
 ' am, indeed, unworthy, most unworthy, thy favour :
 ' but am I not unworthy thy resentment too ? Thou
 ' that sittest on the highest heavens, and seest worlds
 ' infinite dance beneath thee, as atoms in the sun !—
 ' Wilt Thou, oh ! wilt Thou, not remember, that I
 ' am but dust ?

' Yes, LORD ! Thou wilt remember it : thou wilt
 ' remember thy glorious self ; what ancient days re-
 ' sound ; what wonders love divine has wrought of
 ' old. For to whom do I cry ? art thou not he, to
 ' whom none ever cried in vain ? who created not,
 ' but to bless : commands not, but to preserve : not
 ' punishes, but to reclaim. Who has not more re-
 ' lieved, than amazed, with his extremities of love !
 ' for, art thou not the same LORD, who, though
 ' most offended, as if thou wert the offender, be-
 ' seesches us to be reconciled ? Who mourns over the
 ' impenitent ? and over the impenitent for sins against
 ' himself ? and when his sorrow cannot prevail, even
 ' weeps in their stead ? Those tears obdurate Jeru-
 ' salem would not shed, didst thou not take to thy
 ' own blessed lids, which overflowed at the last
 ' prospect of its ruin ? Who, without pious tears,
 ' without the greatest astonishment, can think on
 ' these things ? or, who, without comfort, still greater
 ' than that ?

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Nor end our healing hopes of comfort here; not
 only to beseech, commiserate, and weep, descended
 the LORD of glory, and eternal life, but to die.
 And what a death! and after what a life! A life
 of compassions, without number, and beyond mea-
 sure: what a shining progress, what a stupendous
 ascent in love! He meets the returning prodigal:
 looks compassion on denying Peter! rejects not
 disbelieving Thomas: admits sinful Magdalen: par-
 dons the taken adulteress: and associates to him-
 self, in paradise (where angels cast their crowns at
 his feet), a thief from the cross. What a marvel-
 lous and most adorable climax is this! and is it
 possible for love to rise higher still? Oh, let it rise
 higher, and reach even me.

What am I, Thou most exuberant fountain of
 love! that I should set a bound to such compassion
 as this? Can ocean be repelled by a single grain on
 the shore? What a triumph of mercy to pluck the
 ruined from ruin! What an omnipotent action, to
 save the most lost! though pleasure has fool'd me;
 though reason, conscience, heaven, nay, and earth
 too, in one scale, has been outweighed by a feather
 in the other; though, with Esau, I sold my birth-
 right for nothing; yet, LORD! let these distractions
 of thought, these convulsions of heart, these pangs
 of the wretch, if not the prayer of the penitent,
 reach the foot of thy throne; for his dear sake who
 spared not his most precious blood; oh, spare, par-
 don, bless; yes, bless me, even me, O my Father!
 yes, thou all-surrounding, all-pervading, all-sustain-
 ing, and all-blessing Majesty of Heaven! bless me,
 even me, O my GOD!

Thou! who if thou movest thy lip, it thunders:
 if thou liftest thine eye, the sun is dark: who hast

' thy way in the whirlwind, and walkest on the
 ' wings of the wind; who fittest above the heavens,
 ' and hidest thy footsteps in the great deep! but
 ' (above all) whose superabundant effluence, what
 ' ocean of love, overflows the whole creation! and
 ' to these wonders one wonder more—the forgive-
 ' nefs of guilt like mine: hear the suppliant voice,
 ' see the bleeding bosom, these throws, these throes
 ' of the most vile and abandoned—but most repen-
 ' tant, and heart-broken, of men.

' Then, LORD! come the worst, I will not com-
 ' plain. My joy shall burst its way thro' the frowns
 ' of the world, and the shadows of death. Then—
 " Blessings and honour, and glory, and power, be to
 " Him who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb,
 ' who nails sin to his cross:—Thus will I sing in spite
 ' of my groans! thus will I sing with my last expi-
 ' ring breath! thus will I sing for ever and ever,

' Amen. O my soul! Amen, Amen.'

This, Sir, is that importunate, ardent, persevering
 spirit of address, which was suitable to the state of
 the person from whom I borrowed it. It may pos-
 sibly (partly at least) suit some others. And I thought
 it inhuman, to gaze, so long as I have done, on the
 disease, without aiming at some expedient to mi-
 tigate its malignity. There is a sovereign balm in
 prayer.

I know, Sir, there are certain quietists in devotion,
 saints of great repose in prayer, who may censure
 this as too warm: but when should we be warm, if
 not when our eternity is at stake? Shall we be warm
 in our vices, and cool in our repentance? were our
 passions given for nothing? or given only as the ser-
 vants of sin? Is it not heaven, but its reverse, that

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is to be taken by violence? I, therefore, drop this dispute, not only as unchristian, but undeistical too: for, if there is a God, all our affections are too feeble, all the wings of our soul are too few, to be put forth in pursuit of his favour; and being languid in devotion, is being solemnly undevout. If there is a God, he gave us our passions, as well as our reason; they, therefore, as well as reason, should assist in his service. And, indeed, reason without them, though it may loudly tell, will but lamely perform, our duty. How great a part of the scripture must these men's kind of criticism explode? Poor David must break his harp, lest it give offence. Even angels have their passions; nor are any beings exempt from the need of them on this side the throne of God. Whatever exemption some may fancy in their own favour, let us, my friend, who have seen the necessity of devotion for others, not neglect our own: nor in the pride of instructing, lose the prudence of safety.

You, and I, my friend! ly under two disadvantages in this point: the world's example, and our own years. It is an undevout age: and will you not be surpris'd to hear me say, that ours is an undevout period of life?—Yet it is most certain, that there is a tenderness of heart, and a susceptibility of awe, with regard to God, as well as man, in youth, which, in most, is wanting afterwards. This want is an enemy we must fight; and fervent prayer, that sword of the spirit, is the best weapon against him. Prayer, because the most easy of duties, seems, with many, the hardest to be performed. It costs them so little pains, they think they may as well let it alone. Whereas, it is the supreme, the great mother duty; all other duties, and virtues, are its

progeny ; are brought forth, nursed, nourished, and sustained by it. Devotion is the sole asylum of human frailty, and sole support of heavenly perfection : it is the golden chain of union between heaven and earth ; keeps open the blessed communication :

—“ *Geminique facit commercia regni.*” *Clau.*

He that has never prayed, can never conceive, and he that has prayed as he ought, can never forget, how much is to be gained by prayer.

Dear Sir,

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L E T T E R V.

DEAR SIR,

IN this, and the following Letter I shall touch on five points : Life's Review ; the General Cause of Security in Sin ; Thoughts for Age ; the Dignity of Man ; the Centaur's Restoration to Humanity. The three first are naturally suggested to me by the world's wickedness, and our own ; and our advanced time of life. The fourth, viz. the Dignity of Man, is naturally suggested by the notoriety of its reverse in those, for whose sake these Letters are principally written : for who can look on Lucifer in his abyss, without thinking of that height from which he fell ? by which alone we can take any just measure of his calamity. And the fifth point, viz. the Centaur's Restoration to Humanity, is forceably imposed on me by the transporting thought, that such an event is possible. Yet, should it take place, posterity will scarce believe it. " *Annalium nostrorum laboravit fides.*" *L. Flo.*

I begin with the Review of Life ; and that, tho' chiefly for our own sakes, yet also for the sake of all our grey-headed boys, as Sudbury, Torrismond, Ironside, &c. : for though beasts of so gross a class as they chuse to rank with, scarce deserve to be brought to the manage, yet pupils not yet expelled the school of life, ought still, if possible, to be taught the lesson they have so long neglected : and I offer myself gladly for their tutor ; though I fear they would prefer a tetanotrum * to an apotheosis. Their erudition will not leave them at a loss to know what I mean.

* A medicine to take out wrinkles.

There is nothing of which men are more liberal than their good advice, be their stock of it ever so small; because it seems to carry in it an intimation of our own influence, importance, or worth. We (for you approved it; we, I say) have bestowed abundance of it on our Centaurs, which I fear will bring us in but little thanks. Let us, therefore, return from abroad, come to ourselves, and see if our export of wisdom may not be wanted at home. We have censured the aged; are we not such ourselves? Is there no folly to be found, but at assemblies and masquerades? or is folly not folly, because it hits our own taste? Let us lay the line to our own conduct: let us drop foreign ware, and put ourselves into the scale.

Yes, my friend! let us make a short visit to our former selves. They are, indeed, great strangers; nor much to be liked: yet it is a visit all should make who wish well to the future of life. A Review of Life is an employment agreeable but to few; because none can look back without self-condemnation, and none will look forward but with self-flattery. But though the task may be bitter, it is wholesome too. Ask you, "What advantage from it?"—It is the only way of taking my Centaur's advice*, and knowing ourselves. A man can see himself in retrospection only. When warm in action, he is ever looking on something else; on his point in view: or, if he could see himself, he could not judge aright, either of himself or others. While warm in action, prejudices and passions, excited by the then present objects and incidents, corrupt his judgment: but in a cool review, he becomes rather a by-stander than the party, and is patient of truth. His then former

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rivals are no longer rivals ; therefore he judges better of men. His former points of view are no longer points of view ; therefore he judges better of things. He can judge, nay, he cannot but judge as impartially of himself as of the rest of mankind.

Wisdom is the growth of experience ; but experience is not the growth of action, but of reflection on it. In an active life is sown the seed of wisdom ; but he who reflects not, never reaps ; has no harvest from it ; but carries the burden of age, without the wages of experience ; nor knows himself old but from his infirmities, the parish-register, and the contempt of mankind. And what has age, if it has not esteem ?—It has nothing.

Starting, my friend ! from the same goal, through different paths, which severed our fortune, not our affection, we have run our race ; and now approach its end. Jaded with our long journey, the spur of ambition blunted, and our spirits off their speed, we are glad of rest. In which, reflection on the past is not only useful, but extremely natural. Look on the stormy sea, whose billows reach the clouds ; then on the peaceful lake, where the feather, or fallen leaf lies unmoved ; and you see the difference between the cool evening, and warm meridian of man. Reflection is as natural to the one, as action to the other. Unactive youth, and unreflecting age, are equal blanks in the book of life. Man varies no less than those varying insects at which he wonders. In his morning he crawls ; long ere noon, flutters and flies ; at evening, chilled into languor, he creeps into corners, lies hid, and sleeps : or, if awake, having but little ground before him, nor that the best ; how naturally he looks back on the past ! how naturally his winter's evening calls for its tale ! and to self-

love what tale so natural as our own! How idle forever our tale has been, if we can draw some moral from it, that will abate its insignificance, and give it some little weight by making us wiser for the future.

And want we not to be wiser? On how many fruitless friendships, ill-judged enmities, rash presumptions, cowardly despairs, unmanly flatteries, bold indecencies, idle schemes, airy hopes, groundless fears, opportunities lost, admonitions slighted, escapes unacknowledged, evils improved, blessings neglected, and trifles admired; on what a swarm of infirmities I look back with shame! How ambitious have we been in our attachments, not aware that all most worthy our ambition, we can give ourselves! How fearful of expences, not aware, that till it escapes the gripe, and takes its flight into some prudent use, money is not wealth; that it truly becomes ours only by our parting with it! How fond have we been of applause, not aware that human, separate from superior applause, is the greatest vanity, as well as the most common pursuit in life! How plainly I now see, that few things are more pernicious than too keen an appetite for applause, except a bold defiance of just reproach! That makes coxcombs; this, felons; this calls for detestation, that, for contempt.

How plainly do I now see, that our ignorance has been great! How often have we been so idle as to complain of our wants! that is, of our capacity of being happy: for, without wants, there would be no desires; and, without desires, no gratification of them; and, without gratification of desire, no happiness; for human happiness, nay, the happiness of all created beings, consists in nothing else.

What on retrospect appears to me to be the capital weakness of man, is, that strange ascendant which

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Our wishes have over his understanding: it is this makes a Centaur. How often have we looked on our wishes as infallible arguments for the certainty of what we desired, when others saw it was an impossible point? And of this capital weakness, a capital instance is, that dying men can scarce believe that they shall die. Are we not now as those yellow autumn leaves, which the first blast sweeps away? Yet we seem to think the green bud hardly more precarious of the stem.

On farther review, this is stranger still: our friends are our strongest ties to life: when these are cut, what but folly can renew the charm? what re-engage our disencharmed hearts? and what, in my retrospect, is an object more obvious, or striking than yonder emblems of death? How the tyrant triumphs! What numerous monuments rise over the cold bosoms that once warmly received us! that shared our counsels, our ambitions, our pleasures, and our hearts! Their epitaphs collected would make a volume: a volume how instructive, if read aright! A friend's monument is a friend's legacy; and a richer to the confidante, than any parchment can convey. What, for the most part, is human wisdom, but the melancholy growth of a bleeding heart? The thought of death is the directing helm of life; and he bespeaks a wreck, who lays it aside.

O my friend! how rapid the human march! Men are in haste; how they hurry over the stage! Where are those luminaries in every various walk of fame, in every kind of excellence and renown, who most fired our ambition, and provoked our envy? Are they not passed away as April shadows over the field; or, by the fire-side, a winter's tale? Are not those far-seen, shining lights gone out apace after one another, as

little sparks in the fired leaf; or paper, leaving us nothing but ashes behind? And in their ashes is there nothing to be found but sorrow? may we not light on a little prudence in them?

Sorrow, indeed, predominates. Oh, recent wound! Sorrow how just! Whom lost we the very last moon? —Lost we? that is vainly said: whom lost the public? whom the whole nation? Few have left it more worthy all love, and esteem, than our friend deceased *. He was made by nature to be beloved; and intitled by virtue to be admired.

—“*Quem semper amatum,*

“Semper honoratum, sic Dii voluistis, habebo.” Virg.

Well had it been, if we, like him, had sought esteem; but we would not pay the price. Love we thought would come cheaper; and seeking that, were in danger of losing both. The wise world will part with nothing, but by force. Love can't be compelled, esteem may. And, when it is, we lay in it, at the same time, the surest foundation for lasting love.

My retrospect shews me a transitory love, of which we have been too fond: a love often bestowed by great ones, on those whom they cannot esteem. This love, supposing it sterling, I (*stultus ego!*) returned in kind: but I do not repent it. I may not repent of my virtue: for, my friend! there are two sorts of charity in the world, and which the greatest, is hard to say. We are bound, in compassion, to help the poor to live, and the rich to enjoy; who feel a pain peculiar to themselves, that of being mocked by abundance, which denies them their expected happiness; happiness in proportion to their purse. All I learn from such ardent lovers (for such generally they are) is, that it is dangerous to dip into most

* Sir J. S.

below the surface, lest our curiosity should rob us of our good opinion of them. Much decorum, little homage, is requisite. My whole life tells me, that a just demand for esteem is sacred, but rare. We may well afford to pay it, when it is due. Nor must our love be with-held, where it is not. Universal love enjoined, is designed as an antidote against reciprocal contempt; and as a discipline to human pride, which must stoop to love men in their infirmities and faults: nor is it more our duty than our prudence; how else could we hope quarter for our own, which both tell us of others faults, and bid us forgive them? For many of them we should not suspect, but from the whispers of their parallels in our own bosoms. And therefore, by not forgiving them, we condemn ourselves. If, then, we would be forgiven by ourselves, or others, we must forgive. A truth for which I thank my present review.

What I like least in this survey, for fear it should prove our own case, is this: I find old men apt to think well of themselves, not because they fly vice, but because vice is fled; repute themselves virtuous, because free from boys offences; set down impotence for victory; and triumph, because they have not fought, because they meet no foe. And what makes us even tremble, is, I see some, who, blameless in youth, are overtaken by folly when in years, and (of all sights the most deplorable!) I see them dragged by their white beards into the foulest enormities. Faults which are the natural growth of the distinct periods of life, may meet with some toleration: but the monstrous growth of vices out of season no man spares: because the hot-bed of Lucifer only can nurse crimes, in which nature has no hand.

Heaven avert from us such an end! for, far from

blameless was our beginning. In our early days (called the days of innocence), we had our little villainies; our vice in miniature: as years and temptations increased, in years less ripe than in iniquity, we were no petty criminals, before we were men. We wished, indeed, for wisdom; but what wisdom would have avoided, we made our favourite choice; what wisdom would have chosen, we bid wait till to-morrow. Frequent were our quarrels with our faults; but rarely pushed on to a parting. Pleasure had its charms, and virtue its efforts; and sometimes, in a passion, threw its rider. But triumphs of passion are but short: no rebukes are so powerful as those from our own conduct. Affords not this, then, a strong caution for the future? The distempers of the past periods of our lives are the best antidotes for those to come.

Retrospection informs me, it was, now, open war with our enemy; now, perfect peace. How easy sin sat in our hearts; and called itself spirit, wisdom, any thing but what it was! When some merciful discipline awaked us from our trance, we fought; and we conquered: but what was our conquest? such as rather marred our wrong enjoyments, than wedded us closely to the right. We called the right our beloved, our spouse; but often committed adultery against it; thus losing the joys both of the sinner, and the saint: so motley a creature is man; as mutable, as GOD is fixed. Ours, indeed, was no uncommon case: but others faults are not our absolution. An absolution it is, however, with which many are content: though his Holiness could scarce give his saints one more ineffectual and vain.

Who is he, my dear friend, that can absolve us, or condemn?—Look through thy whole past life,

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and answer. What year, nay, what day, has passed unimpowered to vouch for his clement and absolute reign? See I not, in numberless instances, the naked hand of Providence stretched out, as it were, on this side the clouds, pointing us to good? now, shewing how little this world can give, by pouring on us the full enjoyment of it; to turn our hearts on a better: now, shewing us, by the calamities of others, how much we may suffer in this world; to keep us in awe, though ourselves were unhurt: now, breaking to pieces all our own schemes, and raising our happiness out of their ruins; to teach us humility, gratitude, and on whom to rely; shewing us, that most of our triumphs are errors; and our disappointments, escapes: now bringing us, when most secure, to the brink of the grave; to repress presumption: now snatching us from it, when past all human help; to kindle devotion, and forbid the pain of despair: now defeating us in spite of all our wisdom; now blessing us in spite of all our folly: blessing, to sweeten life; the contrary, to wean us from it; and thus, in both worlds, to provide for our welfare, as far as the nature of humanity will admit?

What a glorious image of divine goodness is this! The wisest cannot pay half its due in their highest opinion, nor the best in their profoundest acknowledgment of it. And can we not show as inglorious a portrait of human weakness in ourselves? How are our two different paths of life equally shewed over with follies! with follies thick as autumn leaves! but not thick enough to hide our faults: so numerous both, that I am quite disinclined to look longer backward; and hasten, for refuge, into some change of thought. And here, shall only

add, that man overlooks the most instructive book in his study, if he reads not himself.

And now, I fear, you will say, that how useful and natural soever *Life's Review* may be, yet you can find but little pleasure in it. In it there is no pleasure to be found but what has cost us some pain; but what we have fought our way to, thro' Nature's perverse byas, and besieging temptations. Unbought pleasure is not the growth of earth: this is a militant state; nor must man unbuckle his armour till he puts on his shroud: for the most victorious veteran may meet with a defeat. Nothing in *Life's Review* can give delight, but what we may call our trophies, or spoils taken in war. All else is vanished as a dream.

What have I said? vanished as a dream!—— Would to God it was! 'twas not! Far from it! Every moment is immortal! Every moment shall return, and lay his whole freight, nothing lost, its every whisper, every thought, before the throne: the throne of him who sent it to man on that commission; and commands it back at the stated day, to make its report; to be registered in eternity, for the perusal of angels, and the justification of their King. Tell our gay triflers, that there is no such thing as a trifle upon earth. Can any thing be a trifle that has an effect eternal? Tell them, though they are so well assured that there is nothing serious upon earth, that time, to man, is in some respects, a more serious season than eternity: that his eternity is absolutely the creature of time: that 'tis soul or fair, rejoices or laments, as Time, omnipotent Time! (that trifle which they throw away) ordains its fate. If they doubt it, let them ask their jovial companion, who died of their happiness last night.

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Many, my friend! have made a worse, many better use of time than we have done. Many have been more criminal; many more innocent. But most men imagine that innocent which has a negative guilt. An idle day is a guilty day, in a life so short and precarious; with more than human thought can carry incumbent on it. There are not more spots in the sun than in the life of a saint.

What then are we?—O my friend! at half a glance through life, I perceive, that, though we have made a shift to creep out of the Augean Stable, yet have we not scaled the temple of virtue: tho' we made the choice of Hercules, yet we wanted his strength: though we, sometimes, lop'd one head of the Hydra; yet, too often, seven shot up in its stead. Whereas, on the contrary, they that have been long tossed by folly, when once landed on a good life, should burn their ships; as Cæsar once burnt those of his legions on the British coast: I mean, that the warmest resolution should destroy the very desire of embarking in ill; and so render a return impracticable.

Such, then, being our feeble attempts, so slender our pretence to wisdom, it becomes us to give those whom we have so freely treated, their revenge: to confess, that, though we are not quite horizontals, yet neither are we quite upright; and, though we have set up for reformers, yet are we not, altogether, men.

A man, my friend! is a glorious being; a great rarity; there are but few to be found. A man is an exalted character, doubly great; he is an hero, and a king. Few kings are so great as to reign over their own hearts; few heroes so victorious, as to drive dominions, principalities, and powers, before them. Both these meet in a real man: he ranks, in

reality, but a little lower than the angels : nor long so low.—O friend! man is a wonderful being! Anon, I will tell thee what thou art; and (mark what I say) I will surprise thee with thyself.

At present, only this—Dare we say, that we are arrived at the character I have mentioned? No. Dare we say, It was not in our power? No.—Why then this cowardice in a possible hero? Why this disloyalty to himself, in a possible king? Whence this reproach to reason, and immortality? Whence this inglorious, and absolute desertion from our godlike selves? Sounds that too high?—In whose image were we made? I foresee your objection; I grant that image is impaired: but I quit not my point; I dare affirm, that beings which are free, rational, and immortal, may be Gods in due time, through divine grace, if they please.

How deplorable our distance from it! Whence this unmanly defect? Know we not, that, unless our conduct is that of a man, it had been better for us, if in a lower species had fallen our lot? Why were we called into being? What we have enjoyed already, poorly pays our mother's pain and our own. Wouldst thou repeat thy part in the comedy? act it over again? Wouldst thou be rejumbled in this rough Thespian cart; dragg'd on by those two skeletons, half-starved Hope, and panting Expectation, through bad roads, now worse and worse, and thy fellow-strollers in a constant conspiracy against both thy pay and thy applause; how well soever thy part is performed; how great soever thy indulgence is to them?—Thou wouldst not. Here and there, indeed, we might pick up a lucky hour, *albeque notando lapillo*, that might make us smile again. But nature, and, indeed, reason, starts back at the whole. If we should

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And a small pearl in one oyster of a million, it would hardly make us fishers for life.

Wouldst thou, then, cease to be?—No, nature shudders at it. That horn of the alternative wounds more than the former: if so, our wishes as well as our nature, push us into eternity. And shall we fear what we wish? Fear it we must, unless we provide a good reception there. We have provided for to-morrow, and to-morrow was not satisfied. If we provide for eternity, our satisfaction will be full. We have provided for many years; for more than we shall ever see; but not for those which will never end.

How great the dishonour, my dear fellow-criminal! is us, who were not blind to the grand futurity, were not cold to the divine rewards, to let the glowing thoughts of immortality so far mingle with the dregs of sense! Is not this, with the wings of an eagle, to drop into the mire? There lyes the pleasure of which the world is so fond; that bane of private property, that presage of public slavery, that sure annihilation of a rational creature, and as sure a creation of a wretch eternal. Pleasure has robbed earth of more lives, and heaven of more souls, than the body collective of all other evils discharging their whole quivers on man.

Our weakness, and our security under the consequences of it, is no uncommon case. Blushing I look round for its fatal cause. And do not I find it, where, if found, it must increase my confusion? Do I not find it in the great goodness of God? If so, how must that reproach and brand the deep ingratitude of man? And, I think, I find it there.

The General CAUSE of Security in SIN.

FOR, consider, my good friend! what can he do that ventures to continue in sin? He cannot defy the wrath divine; that is not in man. He cannot acquiesce under the terror of its consequence. He must therefore presume on divine mercy. "I know myself worthless, yet earth pours its blessings. I know myself worthless, yet Heaven buys me with its blood. What is to be feared, what is not to be hoped from such a GOD? Be my crimes what they will, some yet unrevealed expedient will be found for my safety. For God is love." Thus, possibly he may reason; and thus, at once, do two strange things; cite Scripture to his ruin, and make the mercies of GOD fatal to man.

GOD, indeed, is love; but shall man therefore be a monster? and a monster in the judgment of all men? All confess that there is an admirable consent between the precepts of virtue, and the sentiments of our common reason. All confess that virtue receives a constant approbation from the uniform verdict of our consciences. All confess, that virtue practised, brings in the greatest happiness to society. He, therefore, that is not virtuous, can give himself no satisfactory account, why he was born either with reason, or conscience, or a desire of happiness: since he has nothing of what they all demand from him. And, therefore, he must appear an unaccountable being; that is, a monster, not only to others but himself.

This is more than enough to make vice our aversion, though GOD were love to that absurd degree, which our folly may fancy, and which our vice most

only wishes and wants. But there is no such love in him : it is blasphemous to suppose it. God is love, and therefore—what ? That which many may least expect—therefore God is terrible : from whence arises his marvellous love to man ? Of man he has no need ; the divine happiness is complete : in man he sees no merit ; he knows we are worthless, as well as we ourselves ; but then, far better than we, he knows that we are—Immortal. That therefore (most interesting, and most alarming thought!) that therefore we must suffer, or enjoy, for ever.

Hence, be most assured, my friend ! his regard for man. Hence, for a worm, to-day crawling out of the earth ; and to-morrow more despicably still, crawling in corruption ; his compassion, his solicitude, his councils held on high ; and all the wonders of his love. Wonders ?—much more than wonders to man ; they are wonders in heaven ! They strike with amazement the first angels of light.

Conscious of thy own meanness, can'st thou scarce believe that divine indulgence should thus abound ? Consider : God, indeed, called us out of the dust : but he called us into an eternity : an eternity, henceforward, commensurate with his own : and shall not his concern be commensurate in degree, bear a proportion to his gift ? Shall not one shew as much of the great God as the other ? As he has made us immortal, he has made us also endangered creatures ; creatures that must, necessarily, stand the most important and incomprehensible consequence of their own doubtful conduct for ever. Does not this abate thy surprise at such abundant indulgence ? It must, if " God is love," and vouchsafes to look on us in the mentioned light. In that light he looks on us.

Thence his more than paternal bowels of compassion for the most unworthy of men : thence his omnipotence exerted in giving proofs of his love.

But why (sayest thou) is this love terrible? Is it that love most terrible, which tells us we are in danger of being eternally undone? And this love tells us so; for (as I conceive) it never had existed, had not that been our case.

How deep, then, and deplorable, is their mistake, who presume to sin, because GOD is so good; when GOD is so good purely because he knows that presumption will be their ruin? who presume on impunity for sin, because GOD is so good; when GOD is so good, purely because he knows that sin, and impunity, are incompatible? Such men make a demonstration of their danger, the basis of their security, and fear nothing, because an Omnipotence, that is solicitous for their welfare, gives proof that he is apprehensive of their destruction.

Such men reason ill. Still worse, experience does not convince them. What their experience of every day, every hour proves to be true, they will not believe: they doubt, if they shall be (not to use a harsher word) condemned for their sins. Yet they know that they shall die. Now, as I take it, that death is a prelude, and assurance, of their final condemnation: for, if beings, originally immortal, die for another's sin, can it be doubted, but that they shall be condemned for their own? And that death (which is a demonstration that sin shall not escape unpunished) is unavoidable, they are convinced by their senses: unless our Centaurs, therefore, lay aside their senses, as well as their reason, for the future they must forego vain hopes, too frequent, and too sanguine, among them. Nor longer

of immortality into a presumption on
Heaven's indulgence into destruction;
poison from the tree of life.

Do not, my friend! if others have urged these
things, with regard to the cause of God's great
justice to man, and the certainty of punishment
they bear to me they appear of a very weighty
convincing nature. There are some truths of the
Gospel to men, which, at first aspect, have
something surprising in them: they require, and well
deserve, our second thoughts.

I will give you two; one from scripture; one from
our own thoughts: "With the LORD there is
mercy, therefore shall he be feared."—With man
there is immortality, therefore shall he tremble.—
Tremble at himself! tremble at his own power,
that can give what colour he will to a whole eter-
nity; tremble at his own glory; that he has angels
for his guard, and an Almighty for his friend: yes,
that at all that might incline him to triumph:
that his guards, that inspire presumption, in-
crease danger; are magnificent assurances that he
is plunged beyond hope, be lost past retrieve.
But, indeed, forbids our despair: but not be-
cause his love will save us in our sins; but because
it stops all effort at amendment; and without
it his love desires our welfare in vain. His love is
not as to give us encouragement, and support, in
anything but sin: such, as to support our spirits
in the ruins of a falling world; but not under
the shadow of one unrepented guilt.

This shins light on a part of scripture, which has
shined on it in some eyes; and with others quite
lost its credit: "Work out your salvation with
fear and trembling."

"fear and trembling:" a strange text to those, who fear and tremble at nothing so much as at a disappointment in their lusts. Our salvation must be worked out: wishing, and willing, will not bring it; hoping, and confiding, will not procure it; it will not come by chance; no, nor by gift, and infusion. It must be worked out with fear, because fear is the strongest guard of diligence, without which, this work cannot go on; and with trembling, lest we should fail in this important work; lest we should think too lightly of the divine justice; and lest our very confidence should betray us, even though we were good men: for good men have failed purely from a good opinion of their own state: for a good opinion begets security; security begets negligence; and negligence, temptation; and temptation, a fall: and (if unrepented) a fall into that state, where our first wish will be, that we never had been born: and (worse still!) where there is no last. Pain is sometimes so great, even here, that we lose our senses; there it will be far greater; and (how terrible to say!) our senses will not be lost.

THOUGHTS for AGE.

ON the bank of that state we, now, stand: that post of wisdom, if ever men are wise; which is the reason why they wish it may be long before they arrive at it: for folly is the favourite of mankind; and is it not our own? Though there we stand, we scarce believe it; so much our wishes obstruct our belief: or, believing, scarce know what being there means; so much familiarity takes away our attention, and robs things of their power to strike strong

in our minds. Eternity has so often passed our age, that it has forgot its way to our hearts. Did it enter there, would it not extinguish every earthly passion in them? Yes; as the sun the smallest spark of fire.

Though we stand on its awful brink, such our hidden bias to the world, we turn our faces the wrong way; we are still looking on our old acquaintance, Time; though now so wasted and reduced, that we can see little more of him than his wings and his scythe: our age enlarges his wings to our imagination; and our fear of death, his scythe; as Time himself grows less. His consumption is deep: his annihilation is at hand.

Should we not then turn us round, and look on eternity? that glorious home of all that survives, and outshines the sun; that kingdom of souls immortal! Of immortal souls, Time is only the maturing womb: from eternity they wait their real birth. Are we, my friend! matured? or shall we prove abortive to the world of glory? If we were mature, why tarry here so long? By protracting life, Heaven shows not its favour to those that are fit to die. Is not the business of our day undone, the cause why we are suffered to sit up so late? to be so long on our weary legs, after the common hour of human rest? I fear it is. I much fear we are permitted to live, purely because—we do not deserve it.

Is it not (my languid fellow-traveller in the deep vale of years!) high time to be wiser! lest the greatest of curses should fall on us, that of being wise too late; which is the most emphatical definition of a fool. The world is worn out to us; and we are worn out to the world. The world, which knows its own interest, quits us, as rats a ruined house; if we knew

ours, should we not quit the world, as bees an exhausted flower? We can make no more honey of it; its sweets are gone. Where are its formerly sweet delusions, its airy castles, and glittering spires? Are we not left on a lonely, barren, briery heath, to grope out our weary way, through the dusk of life, to our final home! Shall not the dissolved enchantment set the captive free? Are we Torridmonds or Sudburys? Shall our dotage rivet our chains, when kind Nature would knock them off? To speak a language even Centaurs may understand, "A last card, well play'd, may yet win the game."

Consider; are we scheming still? stretching out a trembling hand, which wants to be supported, to grasp at the nothing that comes next? Any thing now gain'd would rather mock, than enrich us; can any thing enrich, that cannot be enjoyed? Grasp at new faculties, and new powers, if thou can'st find them, or new objects will only laugh us to scorn. But hadst thou even those, if the value of things is in proportion to our term in them, their price at our market should fall very low.

It is a good thing to know when we have all, and to laugh at that cheat *more*, which is ever stealing our hearts. But it is as uncommon as good. Hence, seniors are milking the world after it is dry. Is it not a shame that we should be gleaning sublunary straws, when our harvest of life is over? hoping an after-crop in our stubble? though called to diadems, where harvest is perpetual; where an harvest, more than golden, profusely crowns an eternal year.

As to the pass which is so much feared; the dark subterranean entry to future life; into which our weak imagination peeps, and starts back as a child at a shadow; all thanks to the blessed Gospel, we

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know what will light us up a lamp in it, and lessen its formidable gloom. I have seen a deathbed, the scene of poor Altamont's, where the bystanders were the greatest sufferers; and the king of terrors, by Christian patience, was overmatched. The power of religion shone out without a veil; nor could any rising suspicions of hypocrisy dim its lustre. In such scenes as these the human heart is no longer visible to man; and a glimpse of heaven is discovered in such a sight.

We know what can make us sleep sweetly in the dust: what can smoothe the rough transition; soften death into a sort of translation, which interrupts not (blessed be GOD!) our existence, nor our peace. In peace have many died; and, therefore, it is certain, all may. The whole secret for obtaining that peace, is an absolute resignation to the Most High; which (as hard a task as it seems to some) at the bottom it is no more than owning him to be GOD. And a contrary conduct (as little as it is considered) has Atheism, partial Atheism in it. It is questioning some of his attributes, though not denying a GOD. May that peace be thine! My heart beats with ardour, for thy present peace and future bliss. May I share it with thee! What a poor broken embrace, what a sad fragment of friendship is that which ends at the grave! Such a transitory tie gives a second dart to death, and a double dissolution to departing man; that of soul and body scarce more severe.

Would to Heaven, that all friendships were, evidently, friendships of immortal men. Such, I mean, as gave proof of their having each others eternal interests at heart. Modern, at least, fashionable friendship flows from a polluted source; it tastes too strong of earth; without the least tincture of Man (as above

described); without the least spirit of immortality in it: nay, worse; it often springs from causes that will not bear the light; and resembles the dark streams of Alpheus and Arethusa, that mingle under ground. It should rather resemble Eridanus, which is said to flow from heaven.

How many have we of these subterranean attachments? What is it ties our Centaurs together in so long a string?—Leaping together the same barriers of the decent, and the just; ranging the same forbidden grounds; gorging at the same manger; neighing the same inflammatory tone; or being daily rid, and sorely galled by the domineering insolence of the same inflamed mistress.

Since such their accomplishments, I hope to levy a Lapithean infantry sufficient successfully to carry on the war now opened against them.—As Chiron blew the trumpet which called the Greeks to the siege of Troy; I hear there is a modern Chiron, who sounds as many instruments, as Nebuchadnezzar did to summon his idolaters; and that he raises forces, and ceases not to carry on the war at a vast expence. Doubtless he was typified of old by him who is said in Virgil,

"Aere clere viros, martemque accendere cantu."

For my own part, my friend! I fancy my campaign will soon be over. I have frequent pains: and, I think, I hear the master's call. If so, should we not leave this world, though not yet admitted of the next? Have we not been, thro' life, anxiously providing one year for the next? And shall we grudge to pay half that pains for an eternity?

Consider, my immortal friend! should we not leave the world, before the world leave us? It is dismal

to be left. There is a noble absence from earth, while we are yet on it : there is a noble intimacy with Heaven, while we are yet beneath it. If our affection flies thither, we shall be welcomed by superior beings, and not be missed by men, who delight in novelties ; or, if missed, admired the more for being once in the right. They must be somewhat out of this world, who would be deep in the concerns of the next ; and is it not time we should be so ? Till the business of life (as it is called) is over, its real business is rarely begun : nor always then. Age is apt to carry its allowed title to repose too far : age is the most busy period of human life : but its transactions are not with men ; therefore that absence above mentioned is most fit for it. It is a sort of a third state between this world and the next. How proper then for the reception of those, whose term is out, here, according to the common age of man !

And can it be hard for us to lay this world aside, since they that have fared best in the world, have only the fewest objections against it ? Is it not an old *tragi-comedy* read over and over, which, by no means,

“ *Decies repetita placebit* ? ”

Juv.

To speak in the licentious style of comedy, Man is a mule, of mixed origin, of heaven and earth : earth has had more than its share of us ; give Heaven the rest ; and that for a double reason. All know that Hope is life's cordial : it works miracles ; without happiness it makes men happy. What have been all the pleasures of our former years, but joyous prophecies and bold promises in the name of to-morrow ? Worldly hope in age expires. If he provides not another hope, a man of years, and a man of misery,

mean the same thing. Therefore the same steps are to be taken, whether we would sweeten the remaining dreg of life, or provide a triumph for eternity.

The worldly wishes, which an old man sends out, are like Noah's dove; they cannot find whereon to light, and must return to his own heart again for rest. His natural, and perhaps, most allowable and proper wish, is for respect. But respect for age is a virtue. I need say no more to convince him how little of it he must expect: and, indeed, he but ill deserves it from others, who, by doating on the world, denies it to himself.

When infirmity drives the world from us, or disease confines us to our chamber, should we not be all alone with the great Father of spirits, and Searcher of hearts? Is it not worth while a little beforehand to practise our lesson, that we may be the better prepared to sustain such an interview? Our wisdom cannot add to the days, but it can lighten the burden of life, and lessen the terrors of death. Death forgotten in youth is folly; in age, madness. With regard to that king of terrors, how many in years borrow the security of youth! for it is impossible it should belong to them. Happy they! whom death, when he comes, shall find at home; his visit will have less of terror in it. Out of pure decency to the dignity of human nature, of which the decays and imperfections should not be exposed, men in years, by recess, should sling a veil over them, and to the world be a little buried before they are interred. An old man's too great familiarity with the public is an indignity to the human nature, and a neglect of the divine. A greater intercourse with it than the calls of duty and virtue demand, is indecent, irreligious and contemptible; speaking acquiescence in contempt, do-

age on the world, and oblivion of eternity. His *deceiving himself to be still properly one of this world, and on a common foot with the rest of mankind, is, as if a man getting drunk in the morning, after a long nap, lifting his drowsy lids at sunset, should take it for break of day.*

But grant him to be still of this world; grant him all it can give. What is this world, but a machine played on us by our great enemy for the dissipation of human thought, whose scattered rays must be collected, as it were, to a focal point, in order duly to warm our devotion, and set a pious heart on fire? And can any happiness subsist in age without piety? Impossible! Its intimacy with the world is not for the pleasures it can give; they are past; it is purely to dislodge the thoughts of death, which intrude at that season; that is, it is purely to decline the pleasures of heaven.

Why, my friend, is our day of trial extended beyond the expiration of the common term? Is it not indulged to the great need our past conduct has of it? And shall our folly reverse the kind intention of that divine indulgence to us? Shall it set us farther from our GOD? I am never so strongly struck with the weakness and depravity of man, as when I see grey hairs playing the fool. Hope, which in other evil appearances supports our spirits, fails us there. What can shock common sense, what can create amazement, if not the failings that would dishonour youth, in those that are miraculously alive after the stated period of human life? This is an outrage to reason, beyond the boldness of the desperado that confounds us most: this outdares the felon repeating his crime, not only under the gallows, but with the cord about his neck. Where is that world into

which you and I were born? It is under ground; and a generation of strangers are dancing over our coevals, long since in the dust. Where is that world into which we shall be born? Far, far above the sun, if, while we are beneath it, we behave ourselves like men. But if this life was our only concern, consider, that nothing but being wiser, that is better than those born after us, can possibly rescue the decays of age from aversion and contempt.

Fain would I have my pen of some service to the aged, now my nearest relations, those of blood, are no more. To the former am I related by like date, duty, interest, concern; and, above all,

—“Nunc ipsa pericula jungunt.”

Ovid.

Still eager in worldly pursuits, warm in the chace of shadows, shall we rush, as down a precipice, and leap plumb into the jaws of extempore death?

No, let us halt in our career; pause on the brink, and provide for our eternal peace. Can I better express my love than by pressing it on thee? I press it strongly. And know, my friend! that Heaven, and (as I have shewed thee) a most indulgent Heaven, joins my pathetic wish; and angels, ardent angels, say Amen. And what want they? (mark it well), they want nothing but thy own concurrence to crown their wishes for thy welfare.

Dear Sir,

Yours.

LETTER VI.

T H E

DIGNITY OF MAN.

T H E

Centaur's Restoration to Humanity.

T H E

Dignity of Man resumed.

T H E

CONCLUSION.

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L E T T E R VI.

T H E

D I G N I T Y O F M A N .

HERE, Sir, I enter on that elevated theme, The Dignity of Man.

"Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo."

Virg.

I shall scale the summit of human nature, and set its dignity in the strongest light; that the contrast may strike our Centaurs with a just sense of their own ghastly condition, and more clearly demonstrate the depth of their fall. Many are for degrading their nature, that they may lessen its duties; and for looking on themselves as beings insignificant, that they may be profligate beings with a better grace, and (as they would flatter themselves) with more excuse. They run voluntarily into this error, as men into the dark, that they may sin without a blush; framing a lie (which is the common case) for their apology. Their master Epicurus meant much the same, by setting the gods at such a distance; and, for their repose, exempting them from the trouble of inspecting the trifles of men. A due sense of the grandeur of man's nature and destination, is his best bulwark against the frequent and violent assaults temptation makes on him. This is a subject which I wish had been taken into better hands: for, as it demands all the powers of the noblest pen to reach its heights, so the world stands in need of having this, above all other, pressed home on their hearts;

for all other of any great moment are implied in it. There are but few whose opinions do not too much widen the distance between an angel and a man. I shall bring them nearer together, as the best means for the reformation of Centaurs (as you shall see), and for the most noble exaltation of men.

I have just now observed, that—"Angels want nothing but thy own concurrence to crown their wishes for thy welfare."—This is true: shall I not then be pardoned, if I presume to put the same meaning into somewhat an higher style, and say (with all reverence) that Heaven's desires are at thy mercy?—If so, think, and think again, what art thou? Thou poor, feeble, earth-born mortal! What art thou?—Darts not on thee a stream of heavenly light? Dost thou not see an amazing majesty in man? Have I not, then, made my bold promise good? Did I not, above, tell thee, I would surprise thee with thyself?

Nor can I rest here. A man is almost more than man can conceive; a marvellous being that rises above himself, darting rays of glory beyond the reach of his own sight. My heart is tied to this endearing, transporting, and triumphant theme.

Is thy consent necessary to finish what is begun, or rather, only designed, above? How strangely this sounds! Yet must I proceed in a still higher strain.—In thee it is, (how seemingly bold and impious so to speak) yes, it is in thee, to grant, or deny the request of the Almighty.—And impious, indeed, it would be, if unauthorised by scripture, in which that request is made.

A requesting Omnipotence!—What can stun and confound thy reason more? What more can ravish and exalt thy heart? It can't but ravish and exalt;

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it can't but gloriously disturb and perplex thee, to take in all that thought suggests. Thou child of the dust! thou speck of misery and sin! how abject thy weakness! how great is thy power! Thou crawler on earth, and possible (I was about to say) controul-
ler of the skies!

Weigh, and weigh well, the wondrous truths I have in view: which cannot be weighed too much: which, the more they are weighed, amaze the more: which to have supposed, before they were revealed, would have been as great madness, and to have presumed on, as great sin, as it is now madness and sin, not to believe. Such precious, and beatifying news is brought us by revelation; that revelation which is rejected, and despised, by those that affect to be thought wiser, and happier, than the rest of mankind.

The truths I mean, are implied in what follows; viz. Heaven intends, desires, labours, works miracles, or more (if more can be), for thy welfare: it presses thee, it importunately presses thee, to comply. Consider; how thou art courted? and, by whom? By Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; thy fellow-labourers for thy good. How is thy alliance sought? and at what a price? Angels, inspecting, admiring angels, cannot compute its value. An extreme of love, an extreme of glory, this, which those angels (if angels could envy) might envy to man; for was it not denied to them?

Thou younger, but darling son of heaven! wonder; tremble; triumph!—Yes, triumph; tremble; wonder! Thy greatest emotion falls short of the mighty cause. Thou greatly beloved, greatly favoured, greatly destined, and, oh! greatly endangered!

take heed to thy steps; nor less take fire at thy prize.

Art thou more exalted, or terrified, at what I say? Exultation, and fear, both rise in extremes.—With both passions comply; highly reverence thy own nature; more profoundly adore the divine. Adore it with voice, heart, and life; and thus, to glad all heaven, assert, rescue, ennoble, and with bliss eternal crown thyself: for without thee, in the constituted order of things, Heaven is unable to do it. Its almighty hand is, as it were, tied up by its own decree. Without thee, thou amazing Being! (pardoned be the word so bold) there is impotence in heaven. Nor is it bold when explained; for impotence, when voluntary, is no impeachment of power.

Is all this rapturous?—Yes, such a rapture, as nothing but gross ignorance, or more fatal infidelity, can forbear. Is not rapture due for felicities inexpressible? And what felicity is so much as second to this? It is the close, frequent, and feeling inspection of these *interiora* of man's sublime condition, as immortal and redeemed, that is the highest cordial of human joy, and the richest mine of human thought. A mine deep-dug by few! and yet, without it, man is not more a stranger to the natives of Saturn than to himself. Without it, he must want the true, genuine, vital spirit of a Christian. None without it can be filled with the light and comfort of the Holy Ghost. This, O ye Methodists! gives the real new birth: this enters man in quite another world. In his former world all things are absolutely changed; well nigh annihilated as to his wonted passion for them.

“The heavens declare the glory of the LORD,
“and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.” But

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the Christian mine I have mentioned, infinitely more demands our adoration and praise : infinitely more demands our exultation and joy. Are we transported, and justly transported, at the wonderful operations of nature ; and decline we the contemplation of greater wonders in ourselves ? and when the former but amuses an hour, the last blesses an eternity ? In those stupendous views it is, that the mercy of God, and glory of man, at highest shine. Hence it is, that constant joy is enjoined to Christians as an absolute duty : a duty, on weaker motives, as absolutely impracticable.

You see, Sir, that to dive deep into man, is to dive into an ocean of love divine ; which first drowns us in amazement, then lifts us into triumph ; and, at length, lands us (if we are wise) on eternal life. But too many swim only on the surface of our nature ; like a feather, through their levity, incapable of sinking to those solid and shining advantages, those pearls of great price ; those great, awakening, and strongly stimulating motives to virtue that ly below. But I shall resume this subject before I close. What is already said is enough to produce that good effect which you will find in the marvellous scene which, very soon, will open to you.

T H E
CENTAUR'S RESTORATION
T O
H U M A N I T Y.

AT present, my friend ! we must quit this consecrated, for enchanted ground ; as you will soon, to your surprize and disgust, perceive. I know it is not to your taste ; nor, indeed, to my own : but levity has its use, when perverse patients will refuse what is salutary, if conveyed in any vehicle less agreeable to their vitiated taste ; and the grave reader, who nauseates it, sacrifices (thro' too great delicacy) to mere appearances the substance of what is right.

Thou knowest that our Centaurs can scarce be persuaded that they are not still human creatures ; though *mechantur, scortantur, adulterantur, diabolantur* (I am forced to make words that are bad enough for them ;) and not so much as retain

—" Veteris vestigia formae."

Ov.

Are they not (to speak with reverence in the language of the prophet) as " fed horses in the morning ?" Do they not assemble by troops in ladies houses ? It is Harlots in the original ; and so by us translated. But that is not their only objection to the scriptures. Perhaps, an old Arabian proverb may have greater authority with them. What says it ? " Let him
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THE CENTAUR'S RESTORATION, &c. 179

"spiders, hyenas, crocodiles, efts, adders, and fine
"women."

Here, then, I shall begin my exorcism. Its words
must be strange and barbarous, suited to the occa-
sion. Let not your ear, my friend, be shocked;
but listen, and wait the event.

"May Lais, Thais, Limax, Lupa, Succuba, Qua-
"drantaria, Obolaria, Euriole, Sthenio, Medusa,
"Erinnys, Megæra, and Typhiphone—May all these,
"and all such ladies, whether sick or sound, high
"or low, of blood and title, or ditch and dunghill;
"natives, foreign, or infernal—May this glorious
"groupe of Torrifmond's angels, these gorgons, fu-
"ries, harpies, leaches, syrens, centaur-making sy-
"rens! paid or unpaid, keeping or kept, on fire or
"quench'd; geneva'd or citron'd, in closet or cellar,
"in tavern, bagnio, brothel, round-house, Bridewell,
"or Newgate—Oh! may they cease, from this hour,
"to sing or dance, smile or frown, please or plague,
"pray or swear our British unbritish youth, man-
"hood, and age, out of their senses, health, estates,
"reputation, human nature and hopes of heaven!

"And, these enchantresses laying aside their
"spells, may the bewitched of Great Britain recover
"their pristine form, as Circe's herd, at the prayer
"of Ulysses. At the touch of my disinchanting pen,
"may they leap out of their hides for joy; and lay-
"ing hold on their long deserted definition of man,
"reason and two legs, walk uprightly for the fu-
"ture."

Rejoice with me, my friend! For do I dream? or
didst thou not observe? didst thou not hear?—*Intonuit
lucum.* As the dark cloud which caused it is vanished,
and a flood of light rushes in; so shall it fare with
them. I see their dawning reason; I see the break-

of their moral day. And what I see I shall relate; and what I relate, though strange, let no man disbelieve.

The Centaurs that can read, on perusal of the Dignity of Man, are stung as the Trojan horse, when Laocoon's spear pierced his side; and groan as deeply as that, when

"Insonuere cavae, gemitumque dedere cavernae." *Vir.*

Most of them are much affected, but differently; being, at last, fully convinced that they are not men. One burns his Bolingbroke; another an indecent song: this calls in his bills, pleading privilege no more: that bespeaks a pew against the next quarter: a third blames his delay; swears he will pray directly; falls on his knees, like Cæsar's horse,—rises again with a sigh, and solemn vow, that he will be master of his Pater-noster before to-morrow: a fourth subscribes all his gains by false dice to the Foundling Hospital: a fifth orders two little boys to school immediately, and sends ten guineas to their mothers in Bridewell: a sixth, in a flame of pious zeal, damns a senseless world; and undertakes, in less than a week, to demonstrate that adultery is a crime. A seventh, &c.

But I must not triumph too much. I have not had equal success with the female Centaurs. From a natural constancy of temper, and habitual aversion to change, they come but slowly into my wishes. But, to make amends, when they come, they come with a vengeance, and over-shoot the mark. Mr W—ly (whose converts some of them are) tells them, that they stand not upright, unless they lean a little backward; like a crossier, or like themselves when they coyly refuse a salute: thus, though converted,

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they find not the strait line, but stand still a little bent—to the wrong.

Besides, of my male converts I have somewhat to complain : for some, though changed at heart, yet awed by fashion, and vain of being still fine men, are ashamed to own it ; and appear to be fools to save their credit. These hypocrites in vice, these moral sops, ridiculously good, may be called little men in Centaurs skins : or coward virtue in masquerade.

And worst of all, of some Centaurs I am quite in despair. They fly my pen, and will not be touched for their distemper ; but, being deep stung by worse than the tarantula, run mad for music, and dance themselves to death. Others, with Swift (in that respect a Centaur himself) look on the noble quadrupede as superior to the man. Others, on the contrary, approve, and heartily wish a Restoration to Humanity ; but are careless and indolent. They would, indeed, if a dæmon was not in possession, they would be good ; but will not be at the trouble of bringing a writ of ejectment, tho' Sophronius professes to draw it up for them. The lowest price of virtue is vigilance and industry ; and if it costs us no more, it comes very cheap.

As for those that are truly conscious of their calamity, and heartily desirous of an escape, mark the good effect of the least tendency to goodness ; the mighty change, a Restoration of the human figure, is, actually, begun. But the process is gradual ; nature advances, never leaps. They became not Centaurs all at once :

“ Nemo repente fuit turpissimus.”

Jov.

As evil habits, which occasioned their transformation, were gradually contracted, it is no wonder that their

recovery should prove equally gradual and slow. One sheds a mane; another drops a tail, and appears only as too closely dock'd: some wonder to see slender fingers sprouting thro' hoofs, by their penitential tears mollified into flesh: some, like dancing dogs, continue upright some time; but, tired of that unnatural restraint, drop into Centaurs for life: so dangerous, in moral distempers as well as natural, is a relapse. Some quite restored, yet still retain so much of their former nature, that they are apt to trip, if a strong temptation, like a stone or cart-rut, lyes across their way: some can scarce believe their good fortune, and fear it is a dream. Others, too sanguine, cry out Brother! to the first man they see; who starts at his new relation, with a hide still sticking at his heels.

What a loud call do I hear among them for things strange and new! for dresses suited to the human shape; for pleasures suited to the human mind; for bibles, prayer-books, debt-books! for virtuous comforts, faithful friends, and fit objects of charity! for rational improvement and employments? no longer for New-market trappings, but for human ornaments! this, however, where the restoration is complete. Poor Sudbury is still awkwardly hopping on three legs; while others stand firmly planted on half four: one of whom, more learned than the rest, cries out;

Παίον ἢ μίον παντός.

Hef.

The rest naturally take it for a pious thanksgiving, and give a loud *Amen*.

They that are quite recovered, arrayed in decent, plain apparel, not dappled as the morning, with embroidery, or with lace all over list'd like the beautiful Indian as, call a council; and their first manly

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resolution is to proclaim peace with the Lapithæ, or men of virtue; with whom, from time immemorial, the Centaurs have been at war. Chiron bent his bow against them; but of war various has been the fortune between them. Till within this last half century, the Centaurs encreasing both in numbers and boldness, wearing frontlets of brass on their foreheads, and Horace's *as triplex* on their breasts; and having of late a mighty giant at their head, whose quills, more fatal than the porcupine's, threatened a thousand deaths at once, they began to dream of nothing less than victory complete. But the present reinforcement of their enemies will turn the scale against them. I say reinforcement; for the next step my converts take is to list into the Lapithean service, determined to meet their late friends in no friendly sort, under a banner with this motto,

"Quid verum, atque decens, curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum."

Which promises victory; for they are very formidable foes, who have had the fortitude first to conquer themselves.

At the news of their revolt, offended Torrismond, burning for revenge, cries, ha, ha! snuffs the battle from afar,

"Collectumque premens volvit sub naribus ignem." *Virg.*

The glory of his nostrils is terrible. And still more abundantly his heroic choler rises on hearing that their first destined enterprise is against Bolingbroke-castle, that delight of his eyes, and defiance of his foes; for he deems it impregnable, because it is moted round with Acheron, and its aspiring, proud battlements threaten Heaven.

This castle was built out of the various ruins of

many demolished forts of infidelity, pompously put together, faced over with a material more shining than solid; and cemented with untempered mortar. Sophronius * heads the laudable enterprise. The castle is taken as was ancient Babylon. He first turns the general stream of the nation, by the force of strong and solid eloquence, into a new channel, as Cyrus did the river Euphrates; then entering the castle, and finding the garrison turning things sacred to prophane use, and drowned in debauch, obtains a sudden and compleat victory; but is a most merciful conqueror: for, instead of putting any to death, he only puts the most sensible of them out of countenance: and to their own darling delights, and boasted glories, instead of the gallies, condemns them for life. Obliging them, however, in acknowledgment of his clemency, to wear yellow cockades, impressed with these words, *Be thou a Centaur still!* The bad man's choice includes his punishment.

The same Sophronius, adorned with his well deserved mural crown, rescues the character of a late pious and learned prelate, which the Centaurs boasted Achilles (who

"Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non arrogat,") Hor.

had dragged, like Hector's body, round the town in the dirt. For the glory of Britain, and for the light and emulation of posterity, I see it inscribed on a column of adamant, with a Bolingbroke couchant embossed on the base; who now contributes to support (as much as such a feeble Atlas can) that celestial character which he lately laboured to destroy; proud of his uncircumcised reason; which reason,

* An excellent author in this controversy, now in the press.

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notwithstanding, had evidently lost its authority with himself: for when that is preserved, sense submits to reason; and when sense submits to reason, reason submits to the revealed word of God. And (since some are in love with words) I must observe, that reason stooped to revelation, is reason still; only reason more reasonable; and its great hazard of error is all that it has lost.

And now, my friend! what shall I say on this happy revolution? shall I not out-boast Augustus? He said of Rome, *Latericeam inveni, marmoream reliqui*. I, of London, *Inveni equinam, reliqui humanam*.

Nothing remains, but to cleanse the new deserted stables, and to render them fit for human use; and to persuade the she-grooms, who kept them, into some more decent, and less diabolical course of life; especially my patroness, who, for the honour (as she calls it) of my dedication, has promised to give into my superstition, and to play fair, at least on Sundays, and learn her catechism when the masquerades for the season are over; which, out of an unfurmountable regard for the first, and most amorous, and most musical son, Chiron, she confesses ingeniously, she cannot forbear. For ladies love a Centaur still.

THE

DIGNITY of MAN resumed.

IT is high time, my friend! to quit this fairy-land, of which I know you are heartily tired; and to perform my promise in resuming the Dignity of Man: a theme which my heart affects; and which your conduct, in some measure, inspires. And who can think of it unimproved? he who thinks of his dig-

nity, necessarily thinks of his God: and he who values his dignity, as necessarily worships and obeys him. In a due sense, therefore, of human dignity, our endangered virtue finds her most powerful guard.

Think you that I have carried the dignity of man too high? spare the sacred page. "There, one of Adam's seed converses face to face with his creator. Another is called his friend. He who made the worlds delights to be called the son of a third. He who made the worlds even died for the meanest of men. The meanest of men has it within his power to be an heir of the most mighty God, and a joint heir with the most blessed Jesus." Absolves not this the boldest stroke of my pen? what can raise our self-estimation so high, what can aggrandise human nature so much as this?

In Heaven's great and constant effort for our welfare, is capitally written the dignity of man. That is a key to the moral world, and opens and explains the reason of all God's otherwise mysterious conduct in it; every step of which is evidently calculated for man's present or future felicity, or both. The long shining series, the golden chain of all God's marvellous acts, from the beginning to the close of time, speaks his uninterrupted regard for human nature; and what can more loudly proclaim human dignity than this? O let it not be said, that man's dignity is declared by all things, but the manners of man!

As distant as they may be thought by the thoughtless, heaven and earth are so near together, so shot (as it were) into one another, that good men are truly "foreigners on earth; have their conversation in heaven; are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." To speak allusively to

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the patriarchal vision, good men are angels; only, as yet at the bottom of the ladder; and some angels are only men made perfect, at the top of it. As a man from an embryo, so differs an angel from a man; what one is, the other soon shall be. Since this is the case, (and a most glorious case it is), and since by such multitudes it is either not considered, or not known;

"O fortunati nimium, bona si sua norunt!" *Virg.*

would be no needless memorandum, or improper motto, for all mankind.

But you still have your objection on the whole—"Will not raising so high, and dwelling so long on the dignity of man, occasion pride?" No; on the reverse, a due sense of it will necessitate humility. Pride springs from a conceit, which an individual has of his superiority over some others of the same species. The dignity I speak of is equally the dignity of all men; and what levels, cannot exalt. It will necessitate humility; because, without that, it cannot preserve itself; our native dignity will die in the result. As for that dignity which occasions your objection, we have, I confess, too much of it. We have in abundance what may be called lunar great men: men in themselves opaque, who borrow beams, from their circumstances, or situation; which beams they shew, like the moon, by night: I mean, when ignorance prevails; then the darkened understandings of their admirers give them leave to shine.

These lunar grandees have generally many little surrounding satellites, that help, by their adulations, to gild their opacity. But of such great men, who are forced to assume, (as men must plunder who would be gainers where nothing is due), it must be

said, that the greatest of them would be greater still, if they would only please to be a little less.

They only have solar, or self-born light, who live up to the dignity of their nature. Their light is not only their own, and illustrious; but inextinguishable, and eternal. These, as they are the greatest, are also the most humble of mankind. For they well know, that our grandeur is to be looked for in the love of God, not in the merit of man. And therefore they set it down as a maxim, (and a maxim most true and useful it is), "No man ever thought too highly of his nature, or too meanly of himself."

Here would I cease. But how hard to get loose from this ever-teeming, all-important, and inexhaustible theme! It fills with serene joy the superior region of the soul; and denies entrance to the clouds and storms of worldly perturbation and care. Such the height of its joy, that music, and wine, leave the raised hearts of our sons of delight, far, far below. And yet how is this glorious subject, in most minds, by the love of the world, close compress'd, and folded up, as an oak in an acorn, or a man in the womb! To develope, and expand it, how great my desire! In which of its thousand shining lights shall I set it, for our final contemplation of its mighty moment to man?

Man is the most noble study of man. Let him circle the globe, let him traverse the skies; and then, for something more worthy his notice and admiration, return to himself. To himself he is a theatre immense: and was reputed such, when that theatre had much less to exhibit, than at present it can boast; and when it was but faintly illuminated with the glimmering beams of far more noble lights. The so renowned *Know thyself*, was nothing but a pre-

and requiring a close inspection and survey of this theatre: yet that precept, as to its author, was held divine; and as to its practice, the supreme wisdom of man. That precept is now exalted into an awful command from Heaven; and that theatre is converted into a venerable temple; a temple of the Holy Spirit.

As in some pieces of perspective, by the pressure of the eye, so in this temple, by the pressure or perscrutation of thought, the magnificent prospect is opened and aggrandized still more and more; and opening discovers the full dignity of man. In what does that consist? in the marvellous things the Almighty has done, and designed for him. And if so, this survey gives at once the greatest virtue, and the greatest blessing of life. For who can see those marvellous things without an ardent love of God, which is the supreme virtue of man? and who can reflect on such indulgence past, without an absolute trust in such a friend for the future; which of man is the supreme blessing?

But this blessing, and this virtue, this glory and comfort of life, is lost to those to whom this temple is shut. And it is shut to the careless and ignorant; to the slothful and unawakened, in the most illustrious theory of the Christian religion. If therefore such men, in what has been advanced, shall find any thing like a key to this yet unopened temple; and shall enter its sacred and surprising recesses, and read the wonders of divine love in it; that is, in themselves, in their own condition and prospects; if they shall see and contemplate the three persons of the Godhead, before creation assuming, and through time's whole length exercising their separate parts and provinces of philanthropy; and shall behold an

innumerable flight of angels for ever on the wing to receive their commands, and speed away, on various dispatches, for the temporal and eternal welfare of man—how should I rejoice! For such a key would be next in value to the key of heaven. It opens the portal, the preliminary scene to it. Therefore have I kept it on the anvil so long; and yet how unfinished at last! May some master hand accomplish, and multitudes open the yet absolutely unknown scene of their own nature and blessed destination with it!

And now, my friend, tell me, how must his love of glory fail, how must his ambition creep, who, after the strong inspiration of such a view as this, miserably confines it beneath the sun! Consider this view, and see how high human nature may soar; then look down on the Centaur, and see (if thou canst bear the sight) how low the sons of Heaven may fall? Shall a being whose interests spread so wide as to take in both ends of the creation; shall a being deeply concerned in what was done in the days of Adam, and more deeply still, in what shall be done in the great day of consummation; shall such an expansive, and far-interested being, with the most fordid and despicable self-denial, and the most inconceivably criminal poverty of spirit, imprison his stifled thought, and nail down his little heart to the narrow span of this present life? GOD forbid. If there is the least sense of dignity, or fear of shame; the least spark of man alive, let us consider that we are not only the favourites, but the sons too, of Heaven, and obey in this our voyage of human life, as Æneas in his from Troy, the Delian oracle,

“*Antiquam exquerite matrem.*”

Virg.

But our overwhelming shame, and almost incurable misery, is, that we are so carnalized by our

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life, that our heavenly Mother *, in our esteem, has no blessing for us; that a spiritual paradise is no paradise; that it is a paradise we wish lost; one from which we desire to fall; and to wallow, *Epicuri de grege porci*, in our beloved mire. And yet what is this spot of earth which so swallows us up, and in its gulph of obscenities extinguishes our love of heaven? Its enchantment is very short: a few days, a few hours, may make us as wise as Solomon. For, next assured, earth's rankest idolater, who now, perhaps, in our flourishing school of infidelity, thinks a wiser than Solomon is here, will, at the close of life, in his aching heart, ask Solomon's pardon for not believing him before.

I believe that wise and experienced Prince, whose wisdom and experience was designed to spare future ages their own fatal experience in folly; and closing with his last sentiment, the sum of his divine philosophy, affirm, that many a philosopher may justly be reputed a fool; that as there is but one God, one trial, one great tribunal, one salvation, so there is but one wisdom; that all which, devoid of that, assumes the name, is but folly of different colours, and degrees; gay, grave, wealthy, lettered, domestic, political, civil, military, reclusé, ostentatious, humble, or triumphant; and is so called in the language of angels, in the sole-authentic, and unalterable style of Eternity.

That awful word inspires and awakens ideas that slept before; it points to heaven, and shews me where I fail.—Tho' studious to do it justice, I have wronged my theme: and wronged it much. Somewhat more is wanting to consummate and crown the dignity of man. What have I advanced? "That

* Gal. iv. 26.

"man is near to the blessed angels!" Is he not more?—Yes, most adorable JESU! man is more; much more. O whither dost thou call me? whither dost thou transport astonished human thought? I scarce dare look up to the summit of such stupendous love! Leave I not cherubim and seraphim below? ye first-born of light! ye thrones! dominions! principalities! and powers! what do I behold? how awed, and how raptured! with what prostration of heart, what elevation of joy, from this remote region, this lowest vale of the creation, this land of darkness, and shadow of death, look I up thro' incumbent clouds of misery and sin, and behold—a Man in heaven! in the highest heaven! in union with the Most High! in union with your most adored, and eternal King! and so throned in authority, to you so superior in power, as to make ceaseless intercession for the rest of mankind; not for those whose fall left seats empty in heaven; oh, aid me with your language, with words more than human to praise him! that advocate unwearied for his relations, (proud language!) for his earth-born relations and friends below.

Is not this almost too much for human modesty to mention! for human frailty to credit! for human corruption to admit!—But is it not also far too much for human gratitude to leave unproclaimed, unfounded, unadored? "I go to my Father, and your Father, to my GOD, and your GOD." What heart-subduing, thought-overwhelming, man-exalting words are these! what an amazing, I had almost said leveling, condescension of the Deity! what an amazing, I had almost said what a deifying, sublimation of Man!

O blessed revelation! that opens such wonders. O dreadful revelation! if it opens them in vain. And

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are there those with whom they go for nought? strange men! in possession of a blessing, the bare hopes of which supported the spirits of the wise for four thousand years, under all the calamities of life, and terrors of death; and know they not that it is in their hands? or knowing, cast it away as of no value? A blessing, the very shadow of which made the body of the patriarchal and Jewish religion! a blessing, after which the whole earth panted, as the hart for the water-brooks! a blessing, on which the heavenly host were sent to congratulate mankind, and sing the glad tidings into their transported hearts! a blessing, which was more than an equivalent for paradise lost! And is this blessing declined, rejected, exploded, despised, ridiculed? Oh unhappy men!—The frailty of man is almost as incomprehensible as the mercies of GOD.

Who then can inculcate too much the Dignity of Man? for what equally to a due sense of it can inspire a contempt of the world, a fondness for which occasions the madness I deplore? Indeed a due sense of it, evidently, includes the whole of our duty. It inspires high veneration, and great gratitude to GOD, who gave it; it inspires a reverence for ourselves, which is of utmost moment to our character and peace; and it inspires a proper regard for all mankind, as equal sharers in it: which regard would prevent infinite mischief, and banish half the miseries of life.

This, its universal use, its nature so pregnant of good effects, determined me to the choice of this too much neglected subject: and perhaps, I have now set it in the strongest light: but if not, its importance is such that it should be set in all lights, and from every point that imagination can suggest, and reason

authorise, strike, if possible, the degenerate, deeply-sunk, and ever-groveling human heart. He that looks not on man in the light above, or some light similar and equivalent, knows not himself; is a perfect stranger at home; his heart wanders an exile from his destined felicity; he deprives himself of the powerful impulse which he so much wants, and which Nature denies, and which revelation designed him, for his more vigorous advance in virtue here; and his more sublime ascent in glory hereafter: which two are the whole of his happiness; all the rest is extrinsic, precarious, transient, and inevitably mortal.

And who will dare say, that he who declines, or falls from the noble and elevating object of contemplation above mentioned, and the glorious hopes it inspires, into the barren field of amusement and trifles, or into the bestial abyss of a few years debauch for his portion, who will dare affirm, that such a wretch differs not as much in reason and happiness from the true Christian, as a quadruped differs in form from a man? It is not form, but manners, which make humanity. The mould in which we are cast, only fits what we should be; nothing but our conduct tells us what we are. What wretches are they who contradict their figure, and accuse Nature of having fit a wrong stamp on their lying clay! The most despicable and deplorable being under heaven, is a Pagan in a Christian land. He is like a rank growth of poison in paradise: he confines that thought which should set out at the creation, and travel down, with wonder and adoration at every step, thro' the countless mercies and miracles of GOD, for man, into Nature's final dissolution; and thence launch, for a never-ending voyage, in a blessed eternality,—to the no-

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ding of threescore years; and the wretched means of annihilating that nothing, of contracting that span. Lust exhausts, luxury overwhelms, and, by keeping on fuel, quite puts out the fire.

Where is that dignity which reason exacts, and which revelation exalts, in man? In what I have said on that subject, I have, I think, done more to our purpose, than he who measures the heavens, and numbers the stars. I have taken (as I conceive) the true measure of man: that extensive measure rising above the skies, which the Centaur dwarfs down to the scanty span of the brute creation, to the *bestia triumphanti*; and making (might I so speak) a dung-hill of our condition, with the cock in the fable, for a gain of sensuality, spurns the jewel away; the powers angelic, the radiant beams of the Divinity, in the real man.

But while I contemplate his grandeur (so mixt our nature, so great, and little is man), I feel his weakness: in mind, and body, I feel his infirmities—Pain, this instant, stops my pen—stops it short of what I had proposed to say.—It bids me take, while I may, my leave of him I love.—I take a solemn, because, perhaps a final leave. It is at least possible, we may meet no more: no more in this foreign land; in this gloomy apartment of the boundless universe of God.

O thou the last, the strongest hold that earth has on me! my friend in JESUS CHRIST! my rival in immortal hope! and my companion (I trust) for eternity! come to my bosom: though so far remote, I take thee to my heart. Souls suffer no separation from obstruction of matter, or distance of place; oceans may roll between us, and climates interpose, in vain. The whole material creation is no bar to

the winged mind. Farewell.—Through boundless ages fare thou well. The dignity of Man, and blessing of heaven, be with thee! the broad hand of the Almighty cover thee! may'st thou shine, when the sun is quenched! may'st thou live, and triumph, when time expires!

This cordial duty done, this human debt discharged, my mind is eased, my spirits revive; my pain is less. And when this endless letter is ended, I shall drop thee for the present; and this idle pen, and an idler world (that other feather in the scale of eternity) for ever. He that drops the world, before that drops him, he only knows its real value; and the value of his own soul. And whatever the gaiety of the world pretends to, he only can have a solid, permanent, and uninterrupted joy of heart, who builds it on the rock; on hope of the divine mercy. Give a man the world, and give him no more; and his happiness is at end; the human heart will necessarily feel a futurity, through all the superabundance earth can heap on it: nothing can possibly give it a peace independent of an hereafter: that point of view in his creation, that purchase of blood in his redemption, and yet, in human conduct, that ever neglected All of man.

Ask the last bill of mortality, ask pleasure's or ambition's triumph most triumphant, what is human life? knowledge of the world recommends recess; knowledge of life reconciles to the grave. Few sufficiently consider how great mercy is implied in the grant of death. With a heart quite disengaged, its cable cut, imploring a smooth passage, and gentle gale, bound for that port whence none return, I wait the mighty MASTER's call: that call irresistible, which every moment should expect; which

every soul fights; every knee decays; every wife
and husband; and every monarch shays.

And yet, my friend, some of our few circles close
not altogether with this way of thinking; but ra-
ther seem to judge, that some little degree of preci-
sion may be laid to its charge. As the dial
informs the hour it points out; so they, by their
labours and decays, discover their time of day to
all but themselves. Their desires grow stronger, as
weakness grows more coy. It is somewhat to be
surd, that their hearts gravitate almost as much
to their scarce animated clay, and take but few and
faint sights above the level of the world, though
very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou wel-
come haven of eternal rest! thou delightful region
of inextinguishable love! thou great goal of perfec-
tion! thou bright meridian of glory! thou bound-
less ocean of unrepenting pleasure! thou clay of
God!

And is man invited to this fulness of fruition?
and is man importuned to partake the glories of
the Almighty?—He that weighs not well this tran-
scendent height of love divine, is far from being able
to comprehend the terrible depth of human guilt.
And what guilt so deep as that of a baptized infidel?
A rank heathen rising out of the sacred font, is Rea-
son's greatest shock, the deepest wound of rectitude,
the blackest brand of earth, the sigh of angels, a se-
cond spear in the side of the most blessed JESUS,
and the supreme triumph of the foe to God and
man.

Most gracious GOD! in happiness and dignity,
how widely distant is man from man! in both,
what an immense superiority has the pious believer!
since seems of the same species the believing, and

apostate world. To the first, how justly may we cry out, O ye happy sons of the fallen Adam! where is the damage you received from your father's fall! where are the once lamented miseries of life! where are the once unsurmountable terrors of death! I discern the dignity of man, when his carcass is in the dust. I congratulate his happiness while the worm is feasting on him. Rejoice, O ye dead! exult and sing, ye dark inhabitants of the grave! For do I not behold, even in the grave, the comfort of heaven, when, with an eye of Christian faith, in heaven I behold a man? the man CHRIST JESUS! and, with transport and adoration let me repeat the lofty language of the prophet,—“A man the fellow of the Almighty *.”

THE CONCLUSION.

AND now, my friend! let us consider how deplorably wretched is that man amongst us, who is deaf to such a voice, and blind to such a sight! and how criminally wretched is he, if he voluntarily declines them! if he voluntarily recalls the suspended curse; obstinately presents disarmed death with his mortal sting again; and pours out, in his distraction, all the vials of its original bitterness on the days, how dismal and unredeemed, of an apostate human life! what a formidable revelation does such a man bespeak in lieu of that which brought pardon and peace! what a revelation of no glad tidings awaits him, when his now-involving cloud breaks, and truth thunders on the dreadfully illumined soul, at the no-distant hour of death!

It is, indeed, in man's option, which of these re-

* Zech. xiii. 7.

whom he will admit, (one he must;) but it is not in man's wisdom to make the least apology for a wrong option in so plain and important a point. A point how plain! I shall here just touch on a single proof of the truth of Christianity, which renders any further proof, among proofs innumerable, unnecessary with me, to create and support our Christian faith.

Every thing in the natural world is a proof of a God; and almost every thing in the moral world is a proof of a revelation. As, in the material universe, all exactly corresponds with the previous ideas of it in the divine mind, and in a substantial copy renders legible to man its invisible pattern, in the thought of the ALMIGHTY; so a complete history of mankind (if such could be had) would be little more than the same ALMIGHTY's prophetic word in scripture materialized into fact. The prophets are more accurate and authentic historians of the future, than the most happy genius, uninspired, can possibly be of the past. And want we miracles for our conviction? The series of scripture-prophecies accomplished, is the most striking of miracles: it is a miracle not expiring in a transient act; but of great longevity, persisting in a perpetually-increasing weight and validity, through the protracted course of many thousand years. It is a living, growing, permanent, paramount miracle, lighted up as a lamp of illumination for all ages; that all able to see, might be quite unable to disbelieve; quite unable to retain reason, and, at the same time, renounce belief. For if the scripture-prophecies are fulfilled, the scripture is the word of GOD; and if the scripture is the word of GOD, Christianity cannot be false. Shall we reject it as false, when,

in the present state of almost all nations, we are surrounded, and condemned, by a full circle of demonstration of its being true? let us dispute our own existence, if we would continue of a piece with this.

Where is our natural curiosity? and that, in points which concern us most? would we know what we are; or what we may, or must be to all eternity? nothing but revelation can tell us either. So that if we acted on no higher motive than our instinct, revelation would be precious in our sight. But vice extinguishes not our reason only, but our instinct too, when it would do us any good. Either the strongest instinct of curiosity is extinguished by it, or there is an astonishing and pernicious self-denial in infidels, if their most natural curiosity is still alive. Revelation was written for our instruction; and are we too wise to be instructed by God himself? throw we by unread, and as of no consequence, an unsealed letter sent to us from the ALMIGHTY?

In our infidels it is no less than defiance of common sense, no less than hardened impudence to the nature of man, to pretend, that, on due enquiry, they want proof of the truth of the gospel. Its proof is not only great, but amazing: it is not only sufficient to convince, but astonish: such its accumulated, overwhelming evidence, so truly marvellous its light, that if rejected, it lays us under a necessity of rejecting reason, and revelation, together. And is not reason obeyed, the sole dignity, glory, grandeur, of gods, and men? nothing can so much degrade as the violation of reason; and no violation of reason is equal to a wrong option in this point supreme. Too faint is the strongest colouring of all the severe fables of antiquity, to reach an absurdity so absurd.

That of Ceres's styce, and Chiron's stud, falls short of the mark : for reason, in those days, had not such powerful motives to combat, or such glaring lights to resist; and guilt blackens, in proportion to the strength of the lights resisted, and the motives overcome.

Hence then (as has been proved) if reason makes a man, by ceasing to be Christians, they cease to be men; by what term shall we call those, whom no term can defame? Let, therefore, your offended sister pardon my parable; and let no honest man, for the future, so far offend propriety, and profane our language, as to join in one abused word such repugnant ideas, as those of the Centaur and the man; one the idea of a being, horridly rejoicing in the miserable and mistaken thought, that this short life, shortened by vice and vanity, is his all; and that, like the snuff of a candle, it shall go out for ever; rejoicing to think, that after all his bustle and ambition, he shall only, by his putrid carcase, add rankness to a clod of earth, and defile the dirt. The other idea is that of a being big with humble, but triumphant, hope, of exalting, with his immortal spirit, joy celestial; of adding melody to seraphic choirs, in ceaseless hallelujahs to their eternal king. "Sing praises, sing praises to our GOD; sing praises, sing praises to our king. Praise him, all ye angels! praise him, all his host! Praise him sun and moon! Praise him all ye stars, and light!" For a fairer light, a nobler star, a more illustrious sun is risen: the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings; and all the glories of unbounded creation are outshone by the smallest beam of the gospel; by the faintest hope of wrath appeased, and eternal life.

Yet this is that light, which some, in their supe-

rior wisdom, would extinguish as superstition in man, and set up the dim taper of their reason in its stead.

"O thou worst guide, philosopher, and friend!

"Any, for thou know'st, what is it to be wise?"

Essay on Man.

With equal wisdom, thou mightest imagine the sun superfluous and unnecessary to the material world, and call on chaos for primæval darkness, as the great blessing of mankind. Say, for now indeed thou knowest, is not Lucifer in the list of such benefactors as these?

Though in this his Lordship is quite as good a friend to mankind, as he is a philosopher in his materiality of the soul; yet I will venture advancing towards that precious doctrine, so far, as to call, without scruple, such sort of imaginations the thoughts of the body; for from the body's predominance they, necessarily, rise: and that necessity proves the necessity of religion, which they resist: so that such men (which, perhaps, they are not aware of), while, as much as they can, they condemn religion, they commend it too; they as loudly call for it, as the disease for the cure: for religion is nothing, but an expedient for supporting, against the body's assaults and encroachments, the sacred interests of the soul.

At your request, Sir, in the wide-spread ruins of our faith and virtue, I have taken a slight view of a more melancholy scene than could be presented by famine, pestilence, or the sword: but, by God's grace, we shall repent; and not suffer our greatest glory to become our greatest dread; not suffer our prime and unspeakable blessing, Immortality, to render existence the most insupportable curse. What a

THE CONCLUSION.

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visible inversion is this of the high favours of Heaven! this must be the case, when man is all sense: for to sense nothing exists but the present. Our present is so dear, that our future is undone. Strange conduct! when our step out of life is so short; and so sure, sudden, and innumerable our accidents in it, that almost every moment assures us, that, unless in time we lay hold on our invisible, and, to reason clear, existing God, we shall soon fall from all we hold so dear; and that then, not only all our happiness, but all our hope, is at an end.

What is there, O my countryman! O my friend! O my poor, endangered, immortal soul! what is there, from Adam to this hour, but fully confirms what I say? The world allures us; the world condemns us; he who takes that kind advice, which, through his own experience, the world conveys, will despise all its charms. As ignorance teems with infidelity, so knowledge is a fast friend of faith. If we would but know, what we cannot but know; if we would but believe our senses in what passes, and our common records in what has passed; it would not only reconcile us to, but almost supply the place of, our creed; so very natural a growth is the Christian of the man.

As natural a growth of an infidel is a beast: a beast by God uncreated; by Adam unnamed. That defect Adam's meanest son has supplied, by writing CENTAUR in the horrid gap, which the bold infidel has made, by the desperate erasure of his Christian name.

Is this thought too opprobrious, and a term of reproach? I will make some amends by a short hint of advice, which may save from reproach the whole length of their lives. "Let not the brute any longer

"run away with the man, lest something more should
"ful should run away with the brute."

If this advice is refused, as Alexander said of the Persian effeminate army, "There are many craves, but few soldiers;" so say I, of this Paphian, there are a multitude of people, but a small remnant of men. And of all brutes the most brutal is the volunteer in brutality; the brute self-made; the brute not from the decree, but abuse of nature; the strange brute-affrighting brute, with the stature, stature, voice, and face of man; the brute mysterious, irrationally rational, and (with horror let me speak it), deplorably immortal.

Does the Centaur still sound too harsh in their ears? I will so far indulge them, as to change it for Slave; and instead of making free with their hides, only rattle their chains: for chains they wear, galling, infamous chains! Till stubborn and wild will is broken by grace and reason, no man is free; but madly prefers the heavy burdens of his lusts, and the scourges of conscience, to the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

And is it possible that pride should be the growth of slavery? They are proud of bondage, triumph in infamy, and imagine that in their high flights of folly, and riot unrestrained, there is something great. No man is great, till he sees that every thing in this world is little; and of all that is little, that they are the least. Would they know what is greatness? Great is he, and he alone, who makes the whole creation, and its amazing cause, the circumference, and his own true interest, the centre of his thoughts; who has strength and steadiness, to weigh in perpetual and equal balance, Right and Wrong, Body and Soul, Time and Eternity, Nature and God; and so

nothing to diminish any very anxious thought, for when the greatest good his limited nature admits, and his all-powerful God has promised to bestow: *Job*, "what are the pillars of the earth, and who has set the world upon them; who in his wrath thunders out of heaven, and his adversaries are broken to pieces."

In this, Sir, in giving our supreme good, our foremost effort and concern, in spite of all temptation, lies the greatness of man. Well may it lie in a prudence, such a prudence as angels cannot exceed. If this is wanting, vain are all other pretensions to greatness, whether of king, hero, or philosopher. Had a Caesar, a Marlborough, a Newton, a Bolingbroke, a Fiddler, Tumbler, and Scaramouch, may be thrown together into one promiscuous heap, of equal impotence for attaining true greatness. The performance, indeed, of each of these candidates for glory, the multitude may admire; but the performer, at the same time, will be condemned by the wise, as little-minded and mean; nay, as a very fool, is the language of Scripture; that is, in the judgment of God.

You see, therefore, to what titles of renown our sex men, on the strictest enquiry, may put in a just pretence: fool! slave! centaur!—The last is the worst, and (which would be well for them) may be the least understood; but let them chuse which they please. Were it referred to me, their antichristian glory should be quite aggrandized, and shine, like his Holiness, triple-crowned with all three.

To that tremendous Power, which alone is truly great and good; in whose favour is all light, life, love, peace, joy, and salvation; be thanks, praise, and dominion over the rebel, fool, slave, and cen-

taur, in our hearts. And may our hearts, thus exercised, have a lively feeling of the God invisible, and, panting for the rivers of true pleasure in his right hand, abhor the life in vogue; and in this unshaken, and virtue unfeigned, be confirmed evermore: nor longer (to the reproach eternal of the present age) let our sins, as well as our standing, proclaim us to be

—“*Toto divisos orbe Britannos.*”

But, to damp my rising hope, I know not if another distinction of Britons from the greatest part of mankind, may not have been the glorious indeed, but fatal cause of this most ignominious effect. It is the great glory of God to draw good out of evil. To draw evil out of good, is the great infamy of man.

I suspect, that an insolent pride in British liberty, in some measure, inspires British licence of thought, and extravagance of opinion; which as extravagant a practice for ever follows: if so, vice and infidelity are as much our national distempers, as the scurf, or the spleen. Though discretion much befriends happiness, happiness is no friend to discretion. Good blessings intoxicate. Liberty, fraught with blessing as it is, when unabused, has, perhaps, been abused to our destruction. And as British malt, sublimated into the most pernicious liquor, now so much in use, so British liberty, carried into licentiousness, has poisoned and brutalized the British state. By too much exalting our spirits, it corrupts our manners; and that glory of our constitution is the disgrace of our lives. Purely to prove themselves free men, first turn infidels: hanging themselves would be as good, and, to the public, a less pernicious proof. Such

we should perform a long quarantine ere admitted into embrace even of a brother. Heaven preserve me, my friend, from the freedom, and wisdom, and magnificence now in vogue! He is most free who is bound by the laws; he is most wise who owns himself weak; he is most happy who abridges his pleasures; and he is most magnanimous, O ye bold, impatient, Heaven-defying Britons! who fears his God.

He, indeed, is the most magnanimous; for by that he is fortified against all other. And he is by that the most happy; for the divine favour, the light of God's countenance, is the sun of the human soul, whence all its vegetation of real felicity; and tho' the world (which from him receives all its feeble rays) may greatly shine in our eyes, yet, as wisely may we expect vigorous and vivifying heat from the sun, as any solid satisfaction from it.

But just one word to the busy, ambitious, learned, and gay. Vice and virtue excepted, no man on earth can say, what is good or ill; in as great a tumult and uproar as your passions are, O ye busy! and ambitious! about every thing else: and to love, and know at what God commands, and to desire, and hope what he promises, is the single great lesson, O ye learned! and the single true pleasure, O ye gay! of human life.

And, now, my friend, farewell. I must trust myself no longer with the pen; for while I think there is a possibility, that, touched by some happy stroke, let one fellow-mortal may be raised from a perishing man of the earth, to a blessed immortal, my busy mind perpetually suggests new hints, and my heart knows not how to refrain from pursuing them. The vine grows upon my hands, till its very bulk would defeat its end. New rays of thought dart in

upon me, which, like cross lights, confound and perplex each other. Something of this you might have perceived already. Even Centaurs have been to man; and I feel the strong tie of humanity, when going to bid them a last, an everlasting farewell, like one about to leave unhappy friends in the midst of a destruction, which yet, by timely care, they might escape. Still, at the moment of departure, some new caution occurs to me, some new exhortation, something unsaid, or not so well said as it might have been. But now, the adieu must be said. With only this additional, and still more urgent, and to them surprising motive for reformation, viz. my assuring them, that what I have hitherto, they undeniably, allowed to pass for fable, is actual fact: That the Centaur is indeed not fabulous: That a man without religion is really a beast; and such is he pronounced in Scripture, where it is said that "he also is flesh;" that is, is a brute! and (what should strike them not a little) this is assigned as the reason for sweeping away our degenerate race by the flood. A brute, in truth, he is, with this only difference, that his superior understanding gives him more venom than the most envenomed of serpents; and enables him to do more fatal mischief to himself, and others, than without the curse of reason, abused reason, could possibly be done. So far therefore is it from satire, that kind admonition is of which the word Centaur implies. And as in fable words there was once imagined to reside a magical power over demons themselves, that opinion might still prevail, if the design of these letters, to the wish of all honest men, could succeed, and the foul nature of the Centaur be cast out by the name. If this

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Should be the fortunate event, these pages would be in the lives of those they shall reclaim : and if A. O. Bolingbroke ! and you, his applauding idol-
lers ! what to this is that vain immortality which the meanest writers wish, and which the noblest can scarce attain ? Praise is an error, where pardon is indulgence ; and pardon is indulgence to the brightest parts misapplied. They rather provoke, than please the worthy mind, by laying it under the disagreeable necessity, and clashing dispositions of admiring the writer, and disapproving the man : which, in some sort, is like admiring Nero for his fiddle, when, through his own frenzy, his glorious capital was in flames.

I am, my dear friend,

Nov. 29. 1754.

Truly yours.

POSTSCRIPT.

I RECEIVED your objections, and thank you for them. I believe every judicious reader will make the same. All I can say, for mitigation of their offence, is, that they who take on them to read lectures in this laughing age, if they wish an audience but moderately large, must have weight enough to make impression on the serious ; and levity enough to catch those wanton ears, which, unless tickled by that feather, would continue shut as close as their silly hearts are to virtue, though an angel should take the chair.

I know you are so kindly concerned for your friend's reputation, that the mixture of levity with solemnity, in these letters, makes you apprehensive of its exposing the writer to censure or ridicule. Yet how is it possible to write on so dreadfully mixed a subject, as the ways of man, without being agitated by the most contradictory emotions? His follies, so fantastically wrong, so ludicrously absurd; his capacities for virtue and happiness, so noble; his vices so shocking; their consequence so deplorable.—So earnestly desirous I am of waking him from that dream, in which he nods upon the brink of eternal ruin, that if nothing can do it but my own disgrace, my own buffoonery, (as perhaps he will think it), I rejoice to fall so low. If he will but laugh with me, at himself, he is freely welcome to laugh at me, as much as he sees cause. It is not his applause, but his welfare that is sought. Amendment is the point in view. That point unproposed, (and could the Viscount * propose it?) all censure is mere malice, and mere impertinence is all harangue; and entitles a Tully, a Bolingbroke, and a parrot, to just the same portion of our esteem and applause. Would you, my friend, judge aright of men? ask not what they have done, but why; or their characters will be still in the dark.—But I fear I am setting your judgment of men too right for my own interest; I must leave it under the power of some partiality, for the sake of your humble servant.

Pardon one word more. Centaur † is of Greek extraction, and signifies *stimulation*. May it here prove (as intended) a spur to virtue; and, most, in myself. Standing in awe of my own pen, may I take

* Lord Bolingbroke.

† From *Kivlev*, *stimulatio*

the counsel I give ; thus only can I be sure of doing any good ; thus only can I boldly say, without the reader's leave, that I have not writ in vain. Is not this a new expedient for writing to some little purpose ? and an expedient of no small service to the public, if all our writers would use the same ? Their numbers, then, would be less a nuisance ; and half the nation (blessed change !) would aim at virtue as well as fame. This, too, might be some sort of apology for those heroes of the pen, who, dauntless at their own danger, with the spirit of a Curtius, for the sake of their dear country, leap headlong into the press, (too hasty patriots !), and perish there.

" Vincit amor patriæ, laudamque immensa cupido."

Virg.

THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

OF THE

PROVINCE OF

ONTARIO

IN THE

YEAR 1891

VOLUME

XXV

PART

II

THE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

OF THE

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A
VINDICATION
OF
PROVIDENCE:
OR, A
TRUE ESTIMATE
OF
HUMAN LIFE.
IN WHICH THE
PASSION
ARE
Considered in a New Light.

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TO THE

QUEEN.

MADAM,

IF the following discourse is as happy in its execution, as it is important in its design, it will not be (give me leave to say) altogether unworthy of a royal patronage.

The design is of great consequence, and I think new: it is to remove a prevailing and inveterate mistake, which first sprang, and now thrives in a soil too indulgent to it; and a soil too difficultly subdued, the pride, and ill-nature, and melancholy, and vice of mankind. I mean, Madam, that false opinion, that reflection on providence, "That this world is, in its own nature, that is, "by God's appointment, a world of sorrow, a scene of misery, a vale of tears; and that, to be in it, is to be wretched unavoidably." Whereas this treatise shall endeavour to make it manifest, that providence is not only gracious in the composition, studious of the accommodation, preventive of the accidents, corrective of the mistakes, and liberal to the wants, but lavish also to the luxuries of man; and that God does not only permit, but enable us, and not only enable, but enjoin us to be happy; happy, to a much greater degree than we are, that is, than we chuse to be.

Nor is that error I combat, an error of the vulgar, unlearned, or sinful only: but the learned, wise,

and good, have fatally contributed their sacred authority towards the propagation and establishment of it: either through inadvertency, or the resentment of present pain, or an indiscreet, though well-intended zeal, in the recommendation of a better world.

Most of them have, as it were casually, let fall from their pens, which pursued some other principal point, too severe and unguarded intimations to the discredit of our present State: many have made an invective on this life, a general drift that mingled itself in all their discourses and conversations: and some have made it their particular theme; and avowedly, determinately, and strictly drove at this very point; without adjoining the true causes, the proper cures, the right uses, and salutary effects of our misfortunes and pains; and thus have left grounds of future argument against the goodness, and thrown a present cloud over the glory of the great Disposer of events, the King of time, and of eternity.

Let, Madam, one of his most shining representatives on earth patronize and vindicate a vindication of His providence; let one of the principal ornaments of human life indulge a true estimate of it; let her graciously defend a refutation of an error which flows from a decay of that faith, of which our dread sovereign is the great defender; and which leads to a corruption of that morality, of which her own correct conduct is the distinguished glory. Let that Queen, who is nearly concerned in the sad occasion that turned my thoughts on this subject, take it into her protection; her protection will recommend it to the world, and her

example will supply the defects of this composition on it.

And, Madam, as your example will assist me, so that good providence, whose ways I presume to assert, grant, that your fortune may too! That your most sacred majesty, from this joyful and unclouded morning of your reign, may shine forth a long and illustrious day, as an unanswerable instance of temporal happiness, and an unquestionable heir of eternal, is the constant and fervent prayer of,

MADAM,

Your Majesty's most obedient,

And most dutiful subject,

E. YOUNG.

P R E F A C E.

KNOW not well why, but the passions are a favourite subject with mankind : the reason may possibly be, because men are much concerned with them, both as to themselves and others ; and where we have a self-concern, we have an attention. Or, because they are such powerful and universal springs, that almost all the pleasures, pains, designs, and actions of life are owing to them ; and therefore it is our interest to know them well : or, because every man carrying them in his own breast, he thinks he knows them well already, and is therefore an able judge of such compositions ; and thus his pride has a fondness for them : or, because the passions, like the boy at the fountain, fall in love with their own representation : or, because many are all passion ; and if men consider a treatise on the passions as a history of themselves, it is no wonder they read it with pleasure. Or, because what a most celebrated ancient writ on this subject is lost, to the great regret of the learned and polite world, which is studious of some reparation of that loss ; and the more so, because what other ancients have left on that head, is imperfect and short.

Being sensible how difficult it is to gain attention for works of Divinity, I have insisted more on the Passions than any other head of the following discourse ; in hopes of a more welcome reception prepared for it, by that general taste or disposition of heart, which I have mentioned. I have marked the distinctions and peculiarities of the passions, with some care.

A French author has treated of them with such accuracy and applause, that it conciliated to him the particular favour of a celebrated Queen, who wept for the death of the author of that piece, though she had never seen the man.

But he had a wrong bias on him through the whole, to the prejudice of it; nor could I reap any advantage from him beside that of having such an example of industry and discernment; of which, what use I have made, I do not hope, but fear the reader will too easily perceive. That author indeed displays the passions at large, and pursues them into all their several branches; whereas I could find room for the primary, or radical passions only, at present: but they may one day shoot, under her majesty's benign influence, (who, like the queen abovementioned, is the greatest encourager of arts), and give that one tree of human knowledge its entire growth.

But as imperfect as the discourse now is, (of which I am very sensible), I persuade myself the reader will find an uncommon variety in it: and that the observations, which are by no means drawn from books, but the life, are so far just, that any one who is at the pains of looking on them, may possibly find truths which his own experience can attest; and thus be a witness, as well as a judge of what is here written: he may find some traces, some features of his own condition, as the Trojan met his own picture on a foreign shore. I wish (a rare wish in a writer) that I could be refuted in what is here advanced; for some of the truths are very melancholy. I hope the great length will be excused, since the nature of the subject might easily have betrayed me into a much greater transgression against the common limits of this kind of writing.

If this piece in any tolerable degree answer its title, a perusal will not be thrown away upon it. For I look on it as one of the desiderata in literature, and that of the nearest and most general concern to man.

TRUE ESTIMATE OF HUMAN LIFE.

COL. 3. 2.

set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth.

It is by no means question, but that the birth, life, and death, and resurrection of our Lord, were acts of infinite merit; merit sufficient to satisfy God's justice, and bring sinners to the plan of atonement and salvation: but we must remember, that they wrought any change or confusion in the nature of things. God is as pure as ever, his mercy is as much his aversion: though he can be reconciled to sinners, he cannot be reconciled to sin. And though the sinner may be saved, he cannot be saved unless he, first, be changed; for heaven has more abhorrence for corruption, than it had before. And therefore the unchangeable holiness of God requires, that, notwithstanding all our LORD has done to save us, we should still "work out our own salvation," by a conformity to his example, as well as a dependence on his merit: nor, and impiously, make his merit an encouragement of sin.

For this reason, the Christian is called on to be holy, to live, to die, and to rise again, in a moral

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sense; for in the natural, all these acts are acts of necessity. These expressions import so many several stages in the Christian course.

By nature we are born of flesh and blood, which gives us a constitution fond of what is present, and careless of what is future: and therefore, to secure the future, we are told, that the spirit of God is a new principle of life, which, when received into the soul, will impress on it new thoughts, new aims, and new desires; and to receive this principle, and these impressions, is the Christian birth.

By nature we live a life of sense and self will, which is destructive of our eternal interest; and therefore we are enjoined to take the will of CHRIST for our rule, and his practice for our example; and this is the Christian life.

By nature we die through a separation of soul and body; but this separation makes it well with none, with whom it was not well before; and therefore we are enjoined to die to sin; and this is the Christian death.

By nature (or by God's appointment in nature) we are to rise again, whether we will or no: but nothing that is of pure force can produce an effect to any one's spiritual advantage; and therefore are we to rise by choice; that is, "by setting our affections on things above;" and this is the Christian resurrection; the perfection of the Christian state, and that which the text particularly calls for.

I shall begin with explaining the words. The first word in the original text contains the whole act of our duty: we translate it "set your affections;" but more is implied in it. We cannot love any thing without judging of its worth; nor can we judge of the worth of any thing, without taking it into our

thoughts; and the word signifies each of these acts, to think ^{*}, to judge [†], to love [‡]. Thus the whole signification of the word not only teaches us the whole of our duty, but likewise the method necessary to the practice of it; think, judge, and then love.

The next words are "things above:" shewing the object of our duty. Now things above, in the style of scripture, signify the things of grace and the things of glory. The things of grace are holiness, justice, temperance, charity, and all other Christian virtues. Prov. xv. 24. "The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath;" that is, every wise man will be religious; in this is the way above, that upper, exalted way that leads to life: but sin is the low and ignominious way; so low, that there is nothing beneath it but hell, to which it leads.

Secondly, By things above, are meant the things of glory; as the beatific vision of GOD, the presence of CHRIST, the conversation of angels, the fellowship of saints; bodies glorified, souls ennobled, families enlarged, and entertained with transporting objects, and replenished with unmixed joys! All these things are meant by things above; and one would imagine, that an injunction could not be ungrateful, to "set our affections on things" like these.

And yet it is ungrateful to most of us; and that for this reason, because there are things on the earth too, things contrary in their nature, and inconsistent in their choice, with the things now mentioned; pleasant things, and such whose pleasures are present, and palpable, and always at hand: pleasures of appetite and sense, those winning masters, under whose dominion we spend the first of our years

^{*} Rom. xii. [†] Rom. xiv. 6. [‡] In the text.

for want of reason; and (too often) the self, in spite of it: pleasures that through their number, and opportunity, and prepossession, and custom, get such a fatal ascendant, that unless we are always on our guard against them, our love of things above will either never spring, or (what is all one) never come to maturity. And this is the reason of that caution superadded in the last words of the text, "not on things of the earth."

Having thus explained the words, I proceed to shew the particular method of practising the duty contained in them; which consists (as I have already intimated) in those three acts; first, thinking of; secondly, judging; thirdly, loving the things above.

To think of them is the beginning of our duty. Nothing can act on the soul but by the mediation of thought; that which we think not of, moves us no more than that which is not: and therefore, it is not so much the beauty, or excellency, or gratefulness, or fitness of an object, as thought that makes us love. The object brings in the matter, but thought gives the form to the passion; and if we think not of a thing, it is impossible we should love it, be it never so lovely.

If therefore we would work ourselves to a proper zeal for things above, it is necessary that we should allow ourselves stated seasons of thinking on them: we must call them into our mind, and make them the matter of our serious contemplation; and then the most desirable things will certainly move in us a suitable desire.

Nor is it strange that thought should be necessary to give us an affection for things spiritual and remote, when it is necessary to give us a perception of things sensible and at hand. The eye may be open

an object which it does not see; and the ear with sounds which it does not hear, if thought is differently engaged another way. But small attention, indeed, is necessary, to give things-sensible and present their full force on us; and this is the reason of that advantage which earthly things have on our choice above heavenly: they are immediate; their presence is their power. But religious thought, and that only, can rob them of this fatal advantage; which is a strong argument for the practice of this duty; thought can make absent things present, take away the distance between earth and heaven, and make an eternal good, though future, a better entertainment, and fuller satisfaction to the mind, than all the pleasures of sin, though at hand.

I confess, indeed, since heaven forces itself on our thoughts, from a thousand occasions whether we will or no, that many think of heaven, and yet do not desire it as much as they ought; but this I affirm, that every man desires it in proportion to his thinking: for no man but wishes for heaven, while heaven is on his mind; and if every transient glance of thought can procure a wish, it is a good argument, that a fixed and frequent contemplation would produce no less than an effectual will. If therefore we affect not heaven enough, it is because we contemplate too little.

Indeed there is one strange consideration which offers itself on this subject: since our common notion of things above represents them as infinitely preferable to all other, how is it possible that they should not ever engage our thoughts? how is it possible, that mankind, which abhors nothing so much as pain, should not be for ever meditating on that place, which we confess to be the seat of perfect ex-

emption from it? how is it possible, that mankind, which toils out a weary life in eager pursuits of every appearance of good, should forget that which we confess the supreme? for it is too manifest, that as the thoughts of heaven, and heavenly things, enter most rarely into our minds, so they hang the most loosely there, and are soonest dislodged from their slender hold on us. Every new object, though never so trifling, foreign, or absurd, is sufficient to divert us from the importance of them.

The holy scripture is frequent in asserting, that the devil is actually and perpetually conversant among us; his end and business being to seduce, deceive, and destroy. Nor can there be a greater human demonstration of this truth, than this instance of our thoughts, with regard to the contemplation of eternal happiness; wherein their slackness, avocations, startings, wanderings, and interruptions, are so unaccountable, so contrary to their nature and manner of attention, when applied to worldly objects, that they cannot seem to receive their conduct from any principle, either voluntary or mechanical, that is purely within ourselves, but from the extrinsic influence and injection of that evil spirit. And accordingly we find him charged, Matt. xiii. 19. with this very fact of snatching away good thoughts from the heart of man.

And, indeed, if men but grant that there is such a power, and that he can tempt us (which, if we deny, we must cease to be Christians), the other follows of itself: for the region of the soul, in which the devil forges his wiles to deceive us, is the imagination; and his manner of working is by forming images, or exciting motions there, which become the immediate matter of our thought; and his time of

nothing is then particularly, when he perceives our souls are religiously disposed; for then he is most afraid of losing his hold on us. And thence comes (what I fear all of us have perceived) that in the seasons of devotion, a languor and inattention often comes over us, which we feel neither before nor after: for then especially he attempts our imagination, and throngs it with foreign matter. As therefore my text requires the "setting our thoughts on things above," in order to create such a relish, and kindle such a desire as is due to them; so, in order to setting our thoughts on them, it is necessary to superadd this rule: that in the seasons assigned for such contemplation, we should always guard our thoughts with that petition in the LORD's prayer, "Deliver us from evil," that evil-one (as it may be rendered) who is ever hovering round us, to snatch away good thoughts from our hearts.

But a persuasive to serious contemplation (and nothing less than serious contemplation is sufficient) must seem strange to so gay an age, which has distinguished itself by nothing more than by carrying diversions to their greatest and most expensive height; diversions, which are the reverse of serious thought: an age, which particularly may be said with Seneca, "Pfallere, et saltare elegantius quam necesse est probæ. Pecunia an famæ minus parceret hæc haud facile discerneres." I cannot therefore but repeat what cannot, I think, fail of some effect on all that hear it attentively.

"Ah! my friends! while we laugh, all things are serious round about us: GOD is serious, who exercises patience towards us; CHRIST is serious, who shed his blood for us; the HOLY GHOST is

• Sallust.

“serious, who striveth against the obstinacy of our
 “hearts; the Holy Scriptures bring to our ears the
 “most serious things in the world; the holy sacra-
 “ments represent the most serious and awful mat-
 “ters; the whole creation is serious in serving God,
 “and us; all that are in heaven or hell are serious;
 “how then can we be gay?” To give these excel-
 lent words their full force, it should be known, that
 they come not from the priesthood, but the court;
 and from a courtier as eminent as England ever
 boasted.

I shall now proceed to my second head, judging
 of the things above; which is the second act of our
 duty. As judging of them, without thinking; which
 some do (or our conversations and pressies would not
 be so guilty as they are), is preposterous; so think-
 ing of them, without judging, is incompetent and
 short. We must therefore judge likewise of the things
 above; that is, we must think of them comparative-
 ly, weigh them against all other things that may
 possibly stand in competition with them; and so, on
 a rational and mature deliberation, give them that
 preference which they so well deserve.

Now this second act of the soul is necessary for
 the fixing our affections, for this reason; because the
 simple act of thinking, indifferently raises our love
 to every thing that is pleasureable; but when judg-
 ment comes to examine and discern between those
 pleasurable things, it will find that some of them
 must be forgone and rejected of necessity, because
 they are inconsistent with, and destructive of each
 other. And this, in a particular manner, is the
 case between things above, and things upon the
 earth; both of them offer pleasures, and such plea-
 sures as must necessarily engage our affections, on

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our self contemplation of them : but those two kinds of pleasures are inconsistent ; so contrary to each other, both in their nature and their means, that it is impossible for one soul to pursue both ; such therefore, as entertain a distracted inclination for both of them, are called in scripture, men of two souls.

Since then, it is necessary to chuse one, in order to enjoy either, let our judgment examine these two competitors for our affections, things above, and things upon the earth, and see which of them is most likely to bring in the fullest satisfaction to our souls.

First, let us put this world in the balance ; and, to avoid confusion in so wide a subject, let us separately consider the different orders, ages, aims, relations, constitutions, tempers, and passions of men ; and see this variety united in uneasiness and complaint.

First, as to their orders. The peasant complains of labour ; the courtier in secret repines : in want, what distress ? in affluence, what satiety ? The great are under as much difficulty to expend with pleasure, as the mean to labour with success. In retirement, what oscitancy, what heaviness ? In the world, what conflict, what fatigue ? The ignorant, through ill-grounded hope, are disappointed ; the knowing, through knowledge, despond. Ignorance occasions mistake, mistake disappointment, and disappointment is misery : knowledge, on the other hand, gives true judgment : and true judgment of things below, gives a demonstration of their insufficiency to our peace. Good fortune makes the will undisciplined and dissolute, the imagination vain, the passions strong, and the understanding weak : a miserable state ! affliction is the best school of wisdom ; no vo-

limes are an equivalent for the necessity of reflection that lays us under; but then it must be confessed we pay dear for its instruction: and since the end of wisdom is to lead us to pleasure, what signifies that wisdom which is accompanied with pain?

The marriage state only may be the most happy, but is the most dangerous; as fruitful of calamities, as it is of relations; whose capacity of being our greatest pleasures, is likewise their capacity of being our greatest pains. And if we consult experience more than reason in this point, we have grounds to fear the worst. Nor is reason entirely on the other side; for if there are more vices than virtues, more unfortunate than fortunate accidents in life, the balance, in this state, will probably turn against us: the good in it we look on as our due, and therefore receive it coldly, and without a proper emotion of heart; the bad is unexpected, and therefore keen the resentment of it: the shaft is sharp; the surprise dips it in poison, and doubles our anguish. Both parties look on all that the other can do for them as an absolute debt: this notion leaves both a much less power to oblige, than to disgust; and consequently makes disquiets almost unavoidable.

The state of celibacy, unless it can work out an artificial happiness from the absence of evils, (which requires a peculiar strength of mind), is a desert, melancholy, and disconsolate state: at the maturity of life, tender affections awake in the heart, which demand their proper objects, and pine for the want of them. In this state of celibacy, they must either be extinguished, or continued without gratification: the first is a great violence to Nature; the second her lasting pain; and a pain of that kind, which furnished the Platonists with their principal idea of hell,

paternal affections must be drawn off, like a mother's milk, or they will corrupt, and turn to disgust.

Husband and father are the titles of honour which Nature dispenses, and endows them with greater pleasure than any titles which Fortune can confer. They that resist the impulses of Nature, are resisted by her, in their new schemes of enjoyment; and Nature is a powerful adversary. He that has children multiplies himself, and gives happiness many channels by which to flow in upon him: letting the heart stream out in tenderness on its proper objects, as it is the greatest duty, so it is the greatest blessing of life: to have no one to whom we most heartily wish well, and for whom we are warmly concerned, is a deplorable state. It may be said, wisdom will provide us with such objects in every condition: it may; but it would cost us less pains, if we suffered Nature to ease her of that trouble.

Persons of birth, riches, power, and talents, those shining and envied characters, have all their peculiar evils, the growth of their respective states.

First, Persons of birth: these have their eye on their ancestors, and would have their glory subsist on the merit of the dead. This the world will not agree to, but thinks that an argument for attainments of their own, which the great by birth look on as their exemption from the labour of them: thus are they pained, where they expect homage to find approach. They contemn those of mean extraction; and by that contempt, as it were, exact their hate; and generally have what they exact, with the bad consequences of it. Ardently they desire honours, because it is natural to men to desire an accumulation of that good, of which already they enjoy a

share: hence a disappointment in this pursuit is not stingy in them than others. Who is truly more noble for his high birth? he that despises it; he that despises it as a possession, but values it as an instrument to virtue. Their appellations are their instructors: they are styled Noble, on a presumption that they retain the virtue; their blood is styled Generous, on a presumption that they retain the high nature of their ancestors; their riches are not sufficient.

2dly, Men of riches: these men, which is natural, are so high in opinion of what they largely possess, that they think to have riches is to have every thing; that they think them the price for, and title to all the world can give, or man enjoy. Hence high expectations, and high resentments, and every evil is aggrandized by these. Every wrong accident is a calamity, and not only a calamity, but an injury too; for have not they a title to better things? Others, when they are sick, are sorry; but these are angry also, and look on a gout, or a fever, as an object of resentment; which is still the stranger, because, for the most part, they invite them to their habitations.

3dly, Men of power: they that have it in their power to make the fortune and reputation of others, may have, and often have as many enemies as those whose fortune and reputation they do not make. For men are so fond of themselves, as to think that all others can do, they should do for them. This is unjust, but this is true. And hence it is, that all the uneasy, instead of venting their passion by striking the air, as it is natural for the peevish in their gusts of rage to do, vent it often on men in power, by shooting their arrows at them, even bitter words; because men are apt to think they contract an importance, from the importance of those they injure.

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Whence it is rare that men in power give just offence to such as these: if they injure, they stoop not to do so; they level at the great; for that gives their dignity the highest satisfaction. The great often justify are, the mean often unjustly will be their enemies. Where then are their friends? They must be few, and those few are more likely to be secret enemies to them, than to any others with whom they seek for friends. Because, first, Men of power create the greatest envy, which is our strongest passion: secondly, Their ruin would afford the largest plunder; and our own emolument is our chiefest aim.

Thirdly, Men of talents, if they exert them, it will cost them much pains, and they may probably fail of success, through malice of accident, or indiscretion of choice. Or, if they succeed in their labour, their labour may not succeed in its reputation; or if it does, it is only setting themselves a hard task for the future; for it is double shame to fall beneath themselves. Fame is generally these mens aim; and to fail of our aim, be it never so idle, is infelicity. An author at his lamp tells himself in triumph, now the toil is almost over, the purchase at hand, he is within a month of immortality. But on publication he finds the payment deferred, deferred to the day of his death; too late a payment of that which he cannot transfer to his heir. There is no stronger insatiation than this desire of chimerical immortality. It is very strange; but the secret of it is this: God implanted in the soul a violent desire of approbation, in order to stimulate man into an attainment of his own approbation, which is the most valuable; as he implanted in the soul strong hope, and fear, and love, that he himself might be the object of them, as my text directs: but as these affections,

when they stop short on temporals, become pains; so this violent desire of approbation, when it stops short at men, becomes, though most admirably wise in God's design, that ridiculous and seemingly unaccountable folly of which I speak: and the wisest of men, not attending to this, have sometimes started in surprise and shame, on discovering that some of their noblest designs had their rise and termination in that most despicable point, the opinion of men. Thus you see that the thirst of approbation, when misapplied, becomes a folly, and incurs a shame, which it would most avoid. And this is the state of the greatest gifts that Omnipotence can bestow, when turned on improper ends. This, therefore, which might seem digressive, is not so; it tends to demonstrate the miseries of this life; since hence it appears that we have reason to stand in dread of the very excellencies of our nature, as well as the imperfections of it.

Secondly, consider the different ages: young men desire passionately, and therefore are afflictively disappointed. They desire chiefly gratifications of sense, and therefore soon impair their appetites for them, and anticipate old age by infirmities.

They are extremely mutable in their inclinations; and therefore, as some things by nature cannot, others, through their own temper, shall not, please them long.

They are fastidious in their pleasures, as thinking the most delicate and exalted, the prerogative of their time of life; thus they reject many, and impair the rest.

They are prone to anger, because unsubdued by fortune, and unapprized by wisdom of what they ought to expect: hence are they displeased with

others without cause, and then with themselves for being so; for generally their sense of being in the wrong is as quick, as their propensity to it is strong.

They have not a sufficient regard for things of utility (because they never wanted), and find the bad effects of it; what pride can better taste, pleases them more: hence they are very tender of their honour, before they have gained any; and thus are they pained, not only about things that are, but things also that are not.

They are credulous, because unexperienced; deceived, because credulous; and outrageous, because deceived: and hence, from too fond an opinion, they are apt to conceive too inveterate a dislike for mankind; as fruitful a source of evil, as their first mistake.

The young man's field of reflection is small, for little is past; his field of hope is large, for much is to come; which falling in with vivacity of spirits, and vanity of heart, he indulges it to the exclusion of necessary fear, which is the shield of life; and hence he is perpetually wounded in his peace, fortune, reputation, or health, or all.

He delights in extremes, whereas virtue is in the mean, and happiness dwells with her. He is a squanderer of wealth, as well as of health, peace, and reputation; and by the guilt of youth, lays up poverty for age; of which I am now to speak.

Age is infested with suspicion, excess of caution, disaffection, pusillanimity, illiberality, querulousness, immodesty, garrulity, want of compassion, solid hatred, moroseness, inordinate self-love, extreme covetousness, and distempers.

An old man is suspicious, because experienced. For the knowledge and distrust of mankind are in-

separable. Now he that lives in perpetual suspicion, lives the life of a centinel, of a centinel never relieved; whose business it is to look out for and expect an enemy, which is an evil not very far short of perishing by him.

Allied to suspicion is excess of caution: wisdom, coldness of temperature, and sometimes ill-nature, are mixed in this. I shall chuse one instance that includes them all: in points of speculation he rarely affirms or denies any thing positively, though he is best able to do it: he knows nothing, but is of such an opinion on most occasions; by which, one thing he means, is, to call younger men fools, (who delight in a more sanguine style), and thus, artfully, to gratify his disaffection to them.

He is all disaffection: I speak in general. He loves nobody; because formerly, very probably, his good inclinations have been abused; besides, the affections as naturally contract in the evening of life as flowers at the departure of the sun. Now he that loves none, enjoys none, nor is loved or enjoyed by any.

He is pusillanimous, from decay of spirit, and the blows of Fortune. Now pusillanimity is the want of hope, and hope is the cordial of life.

He is querulous, which is the voice of pusillanimity, and an infallible source of contempt.

He is illiberal, as knowing how hard it is to gain, and how easy to lose; as likewise, from a growing passion for the security of to-morrow; whereas To-day is the mistress of youth. Now illiberality is the source of hatred, as generosity is of love.

He is immodest, I mean hardened to the eye, and unaffected with the opinion of others, because he disesteems them; and disesteems them, because he knows

and praise and dispraise we disesteem, when we disesteem those from whom they come. Now this immodesty is a source both of hatred and contempt. Besides, virtue is always enfeebled by a neglect of praise, which is a food of it.

He is talkative, because his largest scenes lie backward; and his talk on the past is always a censure on the present: now he that censures is displeased. Besides, this talkativeness is disgusting on two accounts: first, as he is generally his own theme: secondly, as it runs counter to the fire and activity of younger men, to whom he speaks.

His compassion is slight, from his familiarity with misfortunes; and his hatred is solid, more apt to vent itself in deeds than words, from the maturity of his wisdom, which loves things effectual, and to the purpose. His former qualities put him in a state of war with mankind: this, in a state of war that gives no quarter.

He is morose, and an inordinate lover of himself. The first, because he envies the pleasures which he cannot partake. There is no such thing, at least in our climate, as a gay old man: a fly in winter is for nations nearer the sun. He is the second, because men rise in fondness for things, in proportion to their hazard of losing them; and his life is on the departure. Hence absurdly his passion for it increases, as its value fails. Now from all that has been said,

His extreme covetousness is accounted for. Money has two excellent qualities for him: first, it will do that for him, which no one thing will willingly do: it will keep him company, as it always does: it will flatter him; it will go on his errands; it will procure him smiles and bows, and all the outside of affection and respect. Secondly, as it is a thing in-

animate, it can give no offence. But not to aggravate this matter, (which it little needs!) granting that as youth is the reign of vehement desire, and vehement desire is a disease, a fever, a pain; so age, indeed, brings on a serenity; experience makes us able pilots in the waves of fortune, and vigour impaired no longer scorches us with the violence of desire. Granting, that the mind gains that strength which the body loses, and intellectual pleasures are then in their full force; yet so, it must be confessed, are,

Distempers too; and what comfort is there in an hospital, or a storm? In youth what disappointments of our own making? in age what disappointments from the nature of things? Human life has then its morning and evening; but the evening and morning are one day; a day of sorrows! different indeed in sort, but in essence the same. And this is the reason why men, always unhappy, are always expecting happiness. For had we no change of scenes to experience one after another, we should sooner be convinced of the vanity of our expectations: whereas we now are amused with hope, which, for pleasure, gives us change of pain; we are wretched, and deceived, which increases our wretchedness; for every sorrow receives a new sting, from our expectation of the contrary.

Thirdly, consider our aims: if we let loose our wishes at things above our desert, how rarely we succeed! or if we succeed, how are we pained with the fears of exposing our insufficiency! How shall we make good the promise our fortune has made to the world? We must live in perpetual constraint; be for ever sweating under a mask of form and artifice, which, in spite of all our care, the wise will see

though; and at their mercy we lay for the precarious character we preserve. And how ridiculous a sight it is to see a man embarrassed by good fortune, and struggling with his own success! To take up more money than our estate can answer, in time, is certain ruin: to take up more reputation than our merit can answer, in time, is as certain flugge.

If our fortune, on the other hand, falls below our desert, how careless are we of exerting those capacities we are really masters of, and of levying that advantage and reputation which is due to them! Our preferment is our punishment; and the consciousness of our worth is at once our pride and our affliction: how unpromising a scene is that for happiness, where our merit increases the number of our pains!

ii If our aims are proportioned to our desert, we may indeed succeed; but our success will soon grow insipid, nay, painful, when we see (as soon we shall!) our inferiors in merit get the start of us in place and fortune; when we find our wisdom and modesty less advantageous, than the rashness and confidence of others.

iii If we stand alone and independant, it is a proud, but a solitary and uncomfortable dominion; unrelieved with hope, which is the life of life itself. If we have our attachments, and lean against our superiors, it is often a shining servitude, a promising anxiety, that excites indeed our spirits, but torments them too, during the suspense; and as often deceives as satisfies in the end. Which has most happiness? a servile hope, or a hopeless independency? He that has many hopes, has many possibilities of disappointment: he that has few, has few occasions of joy.

If we converse with our inferiors or equals only,

we sacrifice the advancement of our fortune to present ease and complacency: if with our superiors, we, in some measure, sacrifice our ease and complacency to our fortune; our caution must be always awake, our abilities always on the stretch; and conversation, which was designed to recreate, must become a discipline, and an enterprize.

Moreover, it is expectation from superiors, that is apt to give a painful and unreasonable awe of them; an awe due rather to GOD than man. It is that which annoys our breasts with pusillanimous doubts and fears; that makes the little heart play its servile passions in all their force, at a smile or a frown; which he that does not *expect*, is free from himself, and in others most justly contemns. The most despicable weakness any one man can be guilty of, is an undue fear of another, which expectation is apt to subject him to.

Obscurity has its obvious disadvantages; and a great name is the mark of envy and reproach; or if reproach spare it, it must be nurtured or lost. Time itself will work decay in glory as in other things, unless it be kept in repair at the expence of returning pains, and a succession of deserts: and if preserved, it has its moral evils; fame from letters makes a man unsociable and overbearing; fame from political wisdom, designing; and fame from arms, incorrect of life. It has likewise its natural evils: for since fame is the general mistress of mankind, he that enjoys it has almost as many rivals as men, and often as many foes as rivals.

One man aims at making his happiness by philosophy, another by fortune. The first is stemming the stream of the world, and his own nature, with endless labour; the second is carried away by that

lives with endless hazard, and every wave is master of his peace.

One follows fancy; and by that time the thing fancied is attained, his fancy for it is fled. Another follows custom, and is fashionably pleased in contradiction to his own heart: seeming to be happy, is his happiness; now seeming happiness implies the want of it. A third follows reason; and reason puts us out of humour with almost every thing about us.

If men have no pursuits, they are a burthen to themselves; if they have, disappointments are a greater. What disappointments interrupt the most successful prosecutions! and, what is worse, possession is the greatest disappointment of all; it destroys the very phantom of happiness, our pleasing error, our sweet flatterer hope, which before we enjoyed. The man of success, and of the highest advancement, first indeed laughs at others; but soon he revenges them, by laughing at himself. He wonders how he could be so passionately fond of what so little deserved his fondness: he is grieved, he is surprized, he is sorry that the absence of those things was able to give him so much pain, the presence of which can afford so little enjoyment. But he usually keeps the secret, in poor hopes of that enjoyment from the mistaken envy of others, which the things envied cannot give him, and takes a malicious pleasure in seeing his unwarned followers deceived as well as himself. There is ever a certain languor attending the fulness of prosperity: when the heart has no more to wish, it yawns over its possession; and the energy of the soul goes out, like a flame that has no more to devour. Who is so wretched as the man that is overwhelmed with a multitude of affairs? He

that is relieved from them, and has none at all! But granting superiority of fortune should give some superiority of happiness, let it be remarked, that he who increases the endearments of life, increases, at the same time, the terrors of death. Which leads me to

The fourth consideration, that of our relations in life; a wife, a child, dear to us as our own bosoms in which they lie, what cowards do they make us! What are their endearments, their softness, their charms, but new terrors in the frown, and new shafts in the quiver of misfortune and death? There is something truly formidable in having such tender blessings as these; and every wise and feeling heart, while it is transported at the thoughts of them, must tremble too.

But all relations are not pained through tenderness of affection. While the father is solicitous for the welfare of his son, how solicitous and impatient is the son (very often) for the death of that very father! What are alliances of blood, but titles for expectation? and what are titles for expectation, but exposures to disappointment, and aggravations of its smart? All that seeming family endearment, comfort, and complacency, which we figure to ourselves at a distance, what is it (too often!) but mutual attacks on the peace, plots on the riches, hopes from the sickness, and joy from the deaths of each other?

The servant envies his master, and sometimes the master his servant, and perhaps with more justice; but, justly neither: for if we well knew how little others enjoy, it would rescue the world from one sin, there would be no such thing as envy upon earth; envy, which is a double folly; folly as it is a sin,

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and folly as it is a mistake; for it results from the supposition of that, which is not the superior happiness of others; which is not, I mean, in that degree we conceive of it; and we envy that which we conceive.

Fifthly, As to constitutions and tempers: in health, what temptation? in sickness, what pain? The misery of many is wrapped up in their very veins; how then shall they fly from it? How many inherit, how many create, how many purchase distempers? Earthquake, storm, war, sweep not half so many as diseases, which we knowingly contract by carelessness and excess. Women, as they are less subject to pains of mind, are more subject to pains of the body than men, to balance that account.

He that is infirm dies daily, and loses all the pleasure of life: he that knows no infirmities, observes not the lapse of time, grows old unawares, and is unprepared for death: but suppose a man has health and wisdom too, how many find in their tempers an enemy to peace?

The tempers are, as I take it, lesser passions, or various fainter shades or blendings of those strong colours on the soul of man. The gloomy, peevish, sanguine, phlegmatic, good-natured, impatient, improvident, wary, haughty, remitting, courteous, arrogant, suspicious, refining, reserved, affable, fearful, timid, modest, proud, delicate, and insensible temper, have all their peculiar evils.

A gloomy temper surveys every thing in the worst light, and can discover no blessings.

A peevish temper quarrels with the blessings it discovers, with its friends, itself; and defeats the labour of providence for its satisfaction.

The sanguine overshoots; the phlegmatic de-

spends : the mild tempts insults; the choleric is his own tormentor.

If a man is good-natured, his friends devour him; if not, his foes.

The impatient feel as much uneasiness from the slow approach of pleasure, as others from the despair of it.

To the thoughtless and improvident, the surprise of every disappointment doubles its pain.

To the wary and foreboding, the constant expectation of calamity, is a calamity itself.

If a man is haughty, and too tender of his honour, he gives the power of hurting him to every wretch that can shew disrespect: and who cannot? If he is remiss and negligent of respect, men will withhold real services, because their ceremonial was not sufficiently welcome: he loses the substance, because he will not catch at the shadow. But forms are more than shadows, they are the robe and defence of realities, which will ever run some hazard when we throw them off.

The very courteous lessen their favours by giving them the appearance of a debt, through their frequent professions of kindness: the favours of an arrogant man are received unthankfully; because, through too great a consciousness of them, he is his own paymaster. And yet he who does not sometimes assert his own merit, will soon have painful suspicions that the former is in the right.

The suspicious, in some measure, justify those injuries they expect. A person of small merit is anxiously jealous of imputations on his honour, because he knows his title is weak; one of great merit turbidly resents them, because he knows his title is strong.

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The refining temper is expressly a maker of evils: not to be obliged by superiors, it construes an injury; to be obliged by inferiors, an affront. To have its wants relieved, it construes an affectation of superiority in its benefactor: not to have them relieved, a contempt. It can work wonders to its own disadvantage, and make a look or gesture it disapproves, a serious misfortune.

Reserve may procure respect, but it gives a disposition to hatred; because that respect is involuntary, and, as it were, extorted; and we hate every thing that invades the freedom of our choice.

Affability procures good-will, but may give a disposition to contempt; because it gives us cheaply that which we desire, and the difficulty of the attainment enhances the value of things.

A fearless temper impairs our caution, and makes us careless of exerting our utmost strength; a timid, gives our understanding the strongest arguments for exerting our strength, but at the same time enfeebles the heart in the execution of what appears so reasonable.

A native modesty in man may conciliate love from the many, but forbids esteem from the wise: because with them no act has merit, but what has choice; and these chuse not modesty by their reason, but suffer it from their constitutions.

Proud men are apt to be injurious, because it is a mark of superiority: they strike more through vanity than malice! but then, as it is a mark, it is a mutilation of superiority too: for it throws down our respect for them, which is a considerable support of it.

Too great a sensibility creates pain, where by nature it is not; too little perceives not blessings where

they are : and there is a too great sensibility from fortune, as well as temper : rank gives some persons such a delicacy, that they have a set of inquietudes entirely their own, the prerogative of their high station, to which their inferiors must not presume to pretend. If humour and passion are indulged, how domineering are they ! if denied, how rebellious ! Which leads me to

The sixth and last consideration, the passions of men.

An account of the passions is properly a history of the active part of the soul, as an account of the understanding is of the contemplative. They may be considered as so many standard-bearers, round each of which many mischiefs are ranged in array against us, and lay waste the tranquillity of human life. They have by others been considered physically, as they constitute part of our nature ; morally, as they influence virtue and vice ; and rhetorically, with regard to composition : but I do not know that they have been considered in a system, or with any accuracy, as the pains, and promoters of the pains of life. In this view I shall speak of them, 'with as much light and distinction as I can. It is the passions that give the perpetual motion to human life, that roll us from place to place, from object to object, nor will the grave itself afford them rest.

First, Anger. It is elegantly said, " The King's " anger is as a roaring lion." Which description of it is confined to kings, only as to its efficacy ; it is as strong, though not as successful in other men. By a king it is let loose into the large field of power ; in others it bites the bars that confine it, and, in both, it lashes itself. This shows it to be a pain ; and it likewise proceeds from pain ; for no one is

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angry, but who has, or fancies he has received an injury in himself, or his; for which he is first grieved. So that Anger may be called the daughter of Sorrow, and the mother of Revenge, which often has fatal consequences. Thus this passion has past, present, and future pains belonging to it.

Anger is frequent; for among enemies it is the natural habit of the mind; and where are not enemies? Among friends it is unnatural, and therefore, when it happens, more tormenting.

As pride is predominant in men, the principal cause of anger is disrespect; the question therefore is, if the angry man acts not against his own supreme purpose? if anger is impotent, that is a blow directly on his pride; if it succeeds by unworthy means, that is a blow on his general character. Anger therefore is not only an evil itself, proceeding from, and leading to evil, but often to the very evil it would most avoid. It falls on its own sword.

Two sorts of men are most subject to this passion; men of felicity, and men of affliction. One because their expectations are high, the other because their uneasinesses are many. The first make their superiority their anxiety, counterbalancing by their own resentment the favours of Nature and Fortune; the second inflame the severities of them both.

Allied to anger is hatred; which is a lasting anger: now hatred is always accompanied with disgust, and disgust is pain.

Allied to hatred are contempt and abhorrence: contempt is hatred without fear; but it is hatred, and therefore pain. Abhorrence is hatred with fear, and therefore its pain is double.

Invective indeed eases the heart, as a discharge the stomach, but it also proves it very sick before.

I do not deny that there is such a thing as a malicious pleasure; but I affirm, it is a pleasure-like that of violent scratching, or striking ourselves in some indispositions; it supposes a distemper, and leaves a wound, both in our reputation and our peace.

Anger has under its banner invective, assault, ruin, and death.

Secondly, Love. By love I mean not the desire of what is useful or honest, but more particularly of what is pleasant. With philosophers it includes the two former, with the world it is often limited to the last. It implies discontent, that is, pain; for he that desires, is dissatisfied with his present condition, be it what it will. And the pain is in proportion to the desire.

To say the least to the disadvantage of this passion; it is putting your peace in the power of another, which is rarely safe even in your own.

There are two things, I think, peculiar to this passion; and what makes them more remarkable, is, they seem somewhat inconsistent. One is our desire of it; the other is a condition that makes it very undesirable. As to the first, we do not seek; nay, we avoid occasions of anger, hatred, fear, shame, or envy; but we seek occasions of love. As to the second, love is all the passions in one: it is anger that it cannot, shame that it does not, fear that it shall not enjoy its object; it is envy of, and hatred to those that possibly may. For envy, hatred, and suspicion, form love's constant companion, jealousy; which therefore stings deeper than either of them, because it is all. Now as many passions as love has, so many pains. Be it therefore a maxim, He that was never pained, never loved.

But though this passion has pains, leads it not to

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pleasures? It may fail of them, and then it is despair, which is most terrible; if it attains them, they may not be lasting; for most pleasures, like flowers when gathered, die.

Love has under its banner watching, sickness, abasement, adulation, perjury, jealousy; and sometimes it lifts anger's most dreadful followers; the only difference is, there, they are standing troops, here, casual recruits; there, they are volunteers, here, they are pressed occasionally into the service; for they do not naturally belong to love.

Thirdly, Fear. This is a most dismal passion; a mind haunted with fear is a hideous night-piece of storm, precipice, ruins, tombs, and apparitions; it is not content with the compass of Nature, as if too scanty for evil, but creates new worlds for calamity, things that are not. But very timorous natures only suffer to this degree; and it is well they do not; for such a fear alone is capable of taking an ample vengeance of an incensed GOD. Insomuch that some have thought that hell consisted in the severe extremity of this passion only.

All that fear, have proportionable pain. It is an anticipation of evil; and has under its banner, confusion, supplication, servility, amazement, and self-desertion particularly.

For I think it a peculiarity of fear, that it defeats its own purpose more than any of the passions. Anger strikes, and if unsuccessfully, it only loses a blow; love pursues, and if unsuccessfully, it only loses a pursuit: fear makes us fly, but makes us stumble too, and the more precipitate our flight, the farther are we from an escape. Hence says the holy Scripture, "It betrays the succours of reason," meaning,

that it betrays it more than any other passion, for all betray it in some degree.

Fears are the shields of life; but if they are too many, they are an oppression, and, like the maid at the Capitol, we perish under them.

Fears we have many; but there is but one that came from heaven, (as the Romans fabled of their Ancile), which is the fear of GOD; all the rest are false; and this sevenfold shield will save us from them: a falling world cannot affright him, whom that shield has under its protection.

4thly, There is also false Shame; when, through an affectation of the esteem of bad men, we are ashamed of what GOD approves; or if ashamed of what is truly shameful, when we are ashamed with regard to men, not GOD. The first is blasphemy in thought; or such a thought as, if expressed in words, would be blasphemous. The second is sacrilege, giving GOD's due to man. This is a shame to be ashamed of; and contrary to the Apostle's "repentance not to be repented of;" for shame is a repentance, or something very like it.

Shame is a sense of estimation impaired, and of our sinking in the opinion of men; I wish I could add of GOD too; for men are not ashamed of injustice or profaneness, at the same time that they blush for an omission in fashion or complaisance: nay, I wish they are not often proud of the former; now pride is shame's reverse. As shining in the opinion of others is the supreme aim of almost all men, shame must be exceeding painful, as it implies the loss or diminution of their greatest fancied good.

Shame has under its banner, self-condemnation, pusillanimity, regret, lying, confusion of face.

Which last puts me in mind of what I take to be

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peculiarities of this passion. Which are three. First, Other passions fly to men for redress of their grievances; this flies from them: anger flies to strike, love to embrace, fear for shelter; but shame flies from all men, and makes an eye as sharp as a sword. Shame's bad estate is seen in this, that its hope and felicity runs so low, as to make night and oblivion, which are the terrors of others, a wish, a joy; "Falsere et effugere est triumphus."

Secondly, Shame has a more infallible mark fixed on it by nature than any of the rest, I mean blushes. Of which I take the reason to be, that this passion necessarily supposes guilt. Which is not the case of any of the passions beside, except envy, which is generally marked with paleness, as shame with the contrary. Shame, I say, necessarily supposes guilt: for none are ashamed but on one of these three accounts. First, Because they are directly guilty. Secondly, Because they want some merit they ought to have. Thirdly, Because they suffer some indignity. Now the want of proper merit proceeds generally from omissions; suffering indignities, from sloth or cowardice; and all these are vicious. But men are sometimes ashamed of virtue. True; but then they consider that virtue as a fault, in the eyes of those before whom they are ashamed of it: besides, then, it does not only suppose, but is guilt.

Thirdly, Lying. This is the false cover of false shame: for true or proper shame has regard to God; and who dares, who can lie to him? For we cannot lie to any purpose, but to fallible beings. Now as false shame is lying eternally, though the person subject to it is ashamed without reason at first, he is sure to have ample reason for shame in the end;

and consequently he will be pained without just cause, and with it too.

sthly, Envy. This is the most deformed and most detestable of all the passions. A good man may be angry, or ashamed, may love, or fear; but a good man cannot envy: for all other passions seek good, but envy evil. All other passions propose advantages to themselves; envy seeks the detriment of others. They, therefore, are human. This is diabolical. Anger seeks vengeance for an injury; an injury in fortune, or person, or honour; but envy pretends no injuries, and yet has an appetite for vengeance: love seeks the possession of good, fear the flight of evil, but envy neither; all her good is the disadvantage of another. Hence it is most detestable; and because most detestable, therefore, Secondly,

Most deformed. For it is the most detestable, because the least natural: or what is least natural works in us the most disadvantageous and deforming effects. We must be sometimes angry, we must love, and fear, and be ashamed, by the necessity of our nature, and there are just occasions for them all. But no necessity of our nature obliges us to envy, nor is there any just occasion for it: for all men are unhappy, only we know not where their uneasiness lyes; therefore there is no natural occasion for envy; and that there should be a moral one, is a contradiction; for the happier others are, the more we should rejoice. As therefore neither our nature nor reason requires envy, it is properly unnatural, and because unnatural, it works such terrible effects in us. How pale, keen, inhuman, and emaciated is its look, if the undeserved indulgence of constitution gets not the better of those effects! Now all these are demonstrations of its extreme pain.

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Men of imagination therefore have been fond of this subject, as painters, poets, historians; for the imagination delights in extremes; and nothing is more terrible than their descriptions of it, but the thing itself. A chearful heart does good like a medicine, but envy corrodes like a poison: it is so sharp, that it cuts the body which sheathes it. Nay, it is thought by some, actually to send forth its virulence; to sit visible in the eyes, and wound its object. Of this opinion seems our greatest English philosopher, who assigns physical reasons why persons in joy, and triumph, are more liable to receive this venom than others. What a wretch must the quiver of such arrows be! such is the pain of envy, that it made the two greatest and bravest men that ever lived weep; it made them shed tears, but not of compassion, though over the monuments of the dead.

Compassion is grieved at others evil, envy at others good. Indignation is grieved that the unworthy prosper, envy that the meritorious prosper also. Emulation is grieved at its own wants, envy at the enjoyments of others. Nay, it principally maligns those who deserve the greatest praise, *viz.* new men, the makers of their own fame and fortune: for rising glory occasions the greatest envy, as kindling fire the greatest smoke. In a word, it is the reverse of charity; and as that is the supreme source of pleasure, so this of pain. This gathers pain, as that gathers pleasures, from all the felicities that happen to mankind. Nor is it only painful, but ignominious. The most imperfect and pusillanimous are most subject to it: the first, because their field for envy is largest: the second, because, through mistake, what is little appears great to them; and, therefore, as the proper object of envy.

Its peculiarities I take to be, first, that it seeks not (as the other passions) good, but evil. Secondly, that this is lasting, the others short. We are angry or ashamed, we love or fear, for a day or a year; but we envy for life; and I look on it to be the most universal source of unhappiness on earth.

It has under its banner, hatred, calumny, treachery, cabal, with the meagerness of famine, venom of pestilence, and rage of war.

Nor are the good and pleasurable passions without their inconveniencies and inquietudes, which is a subject hitherto, I believe, unhandled. Compassion, indignation, emulation, hope, nay, and joy itself, if fairly examined, would prove this true, without any refinement, or affectation of novelty in the attempt.

First, compassion, while it has others misery in its eye, it has its own in its apprehension; and is struck with a quick sense of the obnoxious condition of human nature. Hence it is evident, that fear and sorrow are included in it; and can there be fear and sorrow without pain?

Though I know it is disputed; I venture to affirm, that our compassion for others is accompanied with a concern for ourselves. And I am persuaded of this, from considering the persons who are most, and who are least inclined to compassion.

The least inclined, are the most confirmed in, or the most lost to happiness. The first are not compassionate, because most secure; the second, because they have felt the worst. Little self-concern being moved by the miserable object in these men, little compassion is moved by it too.

The most inclined to it are the timid, and those who have wives, children, and relations. The first,

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because they are more liable to fear for themselves; the second, because they afford misfortune the largest mark.

And all are more compassionate toward their equals in age, fortune, birth, qualifications, or manners, than others; because the misfortunes of such are a more direct alarm of fear for themselves.

Secondly, Indignation. This is a just and noble passion, and none but the noble-minded feel it. It is a generous zeal for right, an heroic and laudable anger at the prosperity of undeservers. An anger therefore foreign to the unworthy, base, and profligate, who can conceive no resentment that men, like themselves, prosper. This elevated passion has sometimes a severer pang than is consistent with life. Cato died of it. He thought no man worthy to triumph over liberty and Rome. And that violent deportment shewn at his death, which has hitherto been wrongfully imputed to a ferocity of temper, was, I think, owing to this accidental passion, which was the cause of his death; this fever, this noble inflammation of mind, this indignation for Cæsar's unjust success. My conjecture clears his character in that respect, and makes it more consistent with that humanity, which he, in a peculiar manner, manifested on many occasions in his laudable life, which was worthy our emulation, though his death was blameable at the best.

Thirdly, Emulation is an exalted and glorious passion, parent of most excellencies in human life. It is enamoured of all virtue and accomplishment; its generous food is praise; its sublime profession, transcendency; and the life it pants after, immortality. It kindles all that is illustrious; and, as it were, lights its torch at the sun. Envy seeks others

evil, emulation its own good : envy refines its excellence without imitation ; emulation imitates and rejoices in it. We envy often what we cannot arrive at ; we emulate nothing but what we can, or think at least we can attain. Hence the young and magnanimous are most enflamed with emulation, and emulation rather of glory and virtue, than of the goods of the body or fortune, till the world effaces nature's first good impressions. " *Hæc imitamine, (say Tully), per Deos immortales, hæc ampla sunt, hæc divina, hæc immortalia, hæc famosa celebrantur, monumentis annalium mandantur, posteritate propagantur.*"

But though emulation is the pursuit of the most amiable things, and that by persons most amiable too, it cannot escape; it cannot escape in a bad world, where men judge of others by themselves; being mistaken for envy, and being treated accordingly. For it has, sometimes, such a degree of resemblance, as to give the weak occasion of error, and the malicious of excuse. Thus it falls *alieno vulnere*; not to mention its own natural pain, which is at least as uneasy to the soul, as extreme thirst is to the body. Hope and fear play the heart of emulation with violence; it has its throbs, its paleness, and tremblings, when carried to an height.

“ ————— Exultantiq[ue] haurit

"Corda pavor pullans, laudamque arrecta cupido."

4thly, Hope and joy. Hope feels the stings of impatience, which is often so vehemently eager, that falling from it into the despair of its object, is sometimes a sensible ease to the mind. Joy, if moderate, scarce breaks through the general disquiet of life; if immoderate, it is a fever, a tumult, a gay

allusion, a transport; which signifies a man's being taken or beyond himself: and he that is not in possession of himself, can but ill be said to be in possession of any thing else: joy in this case goes beyond its bounds into an enemy's country, and becomes a pain; as its tears abundantly testify. Nor has it tears only, but it is sometimes mortal.

Hence some, nay most philosophers, have placed our chief good in serenity or indolence; but this is a mistake. Indolence or rest, is inconsistent with our nature, and not to be found in heaven itself, but in a comparative sense. On the contrary, our heaven will consist in a pleasing motion, a delightful exertion, a transporting progress to all eternity. Annihilation is the only rest for man. What therefore we are to aim at, I shall shew in my second discourse.

To conclude on the passions. We consist of soul and body; the passions are the wants of the soul, as the appetites may be called the passions of the body. So that we are made up of wants, that is, of pains. Who is almost ever free from one passion or another? And as passions are the pains (from which they take their very name), so are they the destroyers too, of our nature. They pain the whole soul, they confound the memory, make wild the imagination, and hurt the understanding, like ebriety, which they resemble in their natural and moral ill consequences. And because they injure the body also, therefore has the physician, as well as moralist, to do with them; and interdicts them to all those who desire length of days. Nay, they are more terrible than that death which they hasten; for many have fled to that from the torment of them. It seems strangest, at first sight, that fear, of all the passions, should put on

this appearance of courage; but it is so far from it, in reality, that no other passion ever arrived at suicide, but through the suggestion of this trembler, fear. Men die because they fear life under its present ills; whereas true valour meets those ills, whatever they are, with the same resolution with which they meet death.

If this account of the passions be just, let us turn them against themselves; let us be angry with anger, ashamed of shame, afraid of fear, pity envy, and moderate our fondness for love. For some are so idle, ridiculous, shameless, as to court the passion itself; and at a time too, when they have the least probability of success. Love, according to the different objects it embraces, like a woman espoused, changes its name, and becomes voluptuousness, ambition, avarice, or vanity: those four predominant impulses that divide mankind between them; that beat on us, like the four winds of heaven, and keep the restless world in a perpetual storm.

On this common subject I shall endeavour to throw some new light, by shewing that they all act directly counter to their own purposes, and are the reverse of that which they pretend to.

First, the voluptuous: can this man be unhappy, whose sole aim is pleasure? whose study is the art, whose life is the chase, of delight? He may, he is, nay, he must be so; because his imagination promises much more than sense is able to pay. Hence, he is always disappointed; but, through ignorance or negligence of the cause of it, though always disappointed, he is always expecting; and repeated experience serves only to upbraid, not correct his conduct. And it must be so: for as every new scene

voluptuousness is a new light to his understanding, which shows the insufficiency of those scenes to his happiness; so is it, also, a new blow to his understanding, and the rectitude of his will, and weakens his power of resisting them. Hence he is reduced to the wretched state of eternally pursuing and eternally condemning the same things; than which, nothing more severe could be imposed by the greatest tyrant, and greatest he. 'Tis not invigorous health, boundless fortune, unrestrained liberty, or that liberty improved by skill and experience into an art of debauchery, to give him satisfaction, nay, not to give him inquietude, the virtue, though reason did not interpose: the body only would find out the vanity, the tædium, the bad effect of voluptuousness; and bare instinct would reproach him with it. His past gives regret, his present dissatisfies, and his future deceives: his imagination imposes on his senses; his senses weaken and vex his understanding; and his understanding censures them both: they persist, that grows peevish and impotent. Thus the divided man, like a divided family, is the seat of misery, and object of contempt.

With regard to the chief branch of sensuality, and its fatal consequences, it may be truly said, that nothing is more stinging than a bad woman's hatred, except her caresses; nothing is more to be declined than her deformity, except her charms. But as for a good woman, her price is beyond gold. She is a pillar of rest.

The man of pleasure, as the phrase is, is the most ridiculous of all beings: he travels, indeed, with his ribbon, plume, and bells; his dress, and his music; but through a toilsome and beaten road; and every day nauseously repeats the same tract. Throw

an eye into the gay world ; what see we, for the most part, but a set of querulous, emaciated, flapping, phantastical beings, worn out in the harn pursuit of pleasure ; creatures that know, own, condemn, deplore, yet still pursue their own infelicity ! the decayed monuments of error ! the thin remains of what is called delight !

In a word, to suppose sense alone can make a man happy, is to suppose reason superfluous, which is blasphemous and absurd : but sensuality brings such a grossness on the understanding, that this argument will not be so much as comprehended by those who have the greatest need of being affected by it. Now, the cause of their not comprehending it, is their total inexperience and ignorance of the pleasures of reason : which ignorance proves this gay, this gallant creature, this patron of pleasures, and profane of delight (what he little suspects), in reality, the greatest niggard in enjoyment, the greatest self-denier in the world.

Secondly, Ambition. Voluptuousness has its intervals : when sense is satisfied, it pauses for the revival of its flame ; like eruptions, it rages and retires by turns : but ambition, like a conflagration, burns on incessant ; the more it has, the more it craves ; the more it devours, the stronger is its fury. Success but sets it new tasks, and is as severe to the ambitious, as misfortune to other men. Every difficulty he cuts off, seven rise in its stead : so that the character of the most ambitious man that ever lived, is a proper motto for all his sons, whose sport, like the leviathan's, makes a tempest, and is the ruin of all about them. " Nil actum reputans, dum quid superesset agendum " That is, it is their maxim, To know no rest. How differs then ambition from

any? As severe exercise from hard labour; the same is the same, only here it is necessity, and there a choice; that is, there it is wretchedness, and here no.

The ambitious thinks all happiness is derived from comparison, and that highest and happiest is the same thing: nor knows that to be high, is not always to be happy; but to be happy, is always, and truly to be high. If his notion is right, how have the wisest of all ages and all nations been mistaken! Either they have persevered in an eternal and obstinate error, in asserting content to be happiness, or he is not happy at all; for ambition imports an absence, nay, a disdain of content: and indeed it has the glory, if it is a glory, of being far from it. Disappointment in small things, gives the ambitious no small anxiety; success in great, no great satisfaction, because there remain still greater things than these; and while his heart burns at some mighty point in view, robs him of the relish of those considerable enjoyments which Nature indulges to the meanest of her children. The violence of the ambitious man's desires sets him at a distance from himself; he is never at home to the present hour, but reaching and grasping at joys to come: all in possession is contemptible. To what amounts then his violent affection for those objects he pursues? To a strenuous endeavour, by getting them his own, to render them contemptible as fast as he can; that is, he seeks at once to gain a blessing, and to destroy it: nor in this only does the ambitious appear to thwart his own purposes, as will appear immediately.

But, first, let us observe that he cannot be extremely happy in the very exercise of his dominion, that blind gust of all his desires; when he stands fur-

rounded with many circles of expelling, useless beings; the whole nest gaping wide, while he can satisfy the cravings but of few. He has not mortals for them all. If he has any humanity, it must touch it, to see himself besieged with eager visages, feverish, repining hearts, disappointed hopes, that will sink deep into the peace of families, and carry distress beyond his knowledge, and perhaps beyond his conception of it. Or if these stings of his fellow-creatures touch him not, he is still more to be pitied.

"Seek not of the Lord preheminance, neither of the king in the seat of honour." But call in the waves of thy desire, climbing over one another for ever; bid thy proud heart be still, and say to it, hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther; and let it, at least, have the bounds of the ocean, as well as the tumult of it.

What does the ambitious man aim at? At dominion, principality, and power; at governing nations, and making his name great in the earth. And who but the pusillanimous and base shall censure him for this? Whatever his errors are, does he not shew, at least, a grandeur of deportment, and a magnanimity of heart? Neither, but altogether the reverse.

For, first, As to magnanimity. There is a manliness of spirit in passionately desiring those things, the contempt of which requires a greater effort of mind, (that is, a greater magnanimity), and bestows a fuller happiness than the possession of them. Magnanimity is a resolution able to comply with the dictates of reason when most difficult; if therefore ambition is unreasonable, (as I have shewn), it must be pusillanimous; I will not therefore call the ambitious an unhappy or a guilty, (as I might), but what will touch him nearer, I will call him a little man; and

that does not touch him nearer, it will be a new
 argument to prove that I call him so with the great-
 est reason. As to the second, the grandeur of his deportment;
 that is, his distance from subjection and servility.
 What then if it should appear that no man is so
 much a slave? Dominion over others is indeed his
 aim; but by that very aim he most effectually sub-
 jects himself to them. Every one, that can retard
 or frustrate his purposes, has an awe over him; is
 the object of his anxious application, and servile
 laws disciplines his deportment, and pains his mind.
 Not to expect is the only means to be free: and he
 that expects, that is, all slavery; while domi-
 nion, nay, because dominion is his only aim. And
 thus it fares with all irregular pursuits of happiness;
 they contradict the purpose of God, and therefore
 must counteract themselves; for God will not be
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 ness, and to convince us of it most strongly, they
 that make not use of his means, but their own, to
 that end, shall not only fail of it, but their endea-
 vours shall be their hindrance, shall work them back-
 wards, and set them at a greater distance from it.
 Thus the voluptuary just mentioned, while he too
 strongly pursues the objects, most effectually blunts
 his powers of appetite. The covetous, while he in-
 stantly desires to become rich, though he succeeds
 in all his attempts, he fails of his end; nay, fails of
 it by that success: God, to chastise, and, as it were,
 to insult him too, gives him the thing, but with-
 holds the enjoyment; nay, commands abundance to
 make him poor. Thus, and thus only, can that mi-
 serable conduct of the covetous be accounted for;
 of whom,

Thirdly, I am about to speak. The covetous strongly exposes human nature, by shewing us an instance in one person how much she desires, and how little she wants. For who subsists on so little, who grasps at so much? He mistakes the means for the end; money for enjoyment; nay, the means in his hands, makes against his end, and the power of enjoying is an inducement to self-denial. The gold that comes into his possession but changes its mine, and is further from the light than ever. His impiety and his folly are equally gross. As to the first, he is often in scripture called an idolater, because he worships his wealth: as to the second, that his idol, like other idols of old, requires severer service of him than the true God; more rigid austerities than religion enjoins: his toils, his self-denials, his fervent devotion to gain, is greater than that which might carry him to heaven. Covetousness is nothing but the painful art of making industry sinful, wealth indigent, life sordid, death terrible, and heirs ungrateful, without any manner of guilt.

But to set it in the clearest and shortest light; what is wealth? a security put into our hands, that the enjoyments of this world shall be delivered to us, whenever we please, on that title. Now if that title rather denies than gives us those enjoyments, it loses its nature; it is no longer a title indulged to our necessities, but it is a warrant served on our folly, to deliver us over to wretchedness, to shame, and to want. So that the richest miser has no wealth.

Nothing is so strange as man's inextinguishable thirst for more: nay, he pants after that which he has; for I affirm, that infinite numbers have sufficient means of happiness already in their hands, and sufficient means is what they are reaching after, for

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who needs more? But men know not what they possess. How few have made an inventory of their own blessings! how few know what they do not want! Hence, *Know thyself* was said to come from heaven: for, without it, no man can be content. Our pains are from our desires, not from our wants; for which most material truth, I shall mention two arguments.

First, If we examine, we shall often find, that, after burning with some vehement desire, we are quieted by despair, as much, and perhaps, more happily, than we should have been by success.

Second, Let some great pain seize us in our most rapid pursuit after what we imagine essential to our peace, and the ceasing of that superior pain will give us a momentary conviction, that we were really, then, happy, when we thought ourselves miserable; but folly soon reclaims us as her own.

If we could lay aside but two things; first, our own imagination, which makes us think things necessary which are not; secondly, our deference for the opinion of the world, which makes us incapable of being happy, unless we are thought so; the majority of mankind would be much happier than they, at present, imagine; they would grow rich extempore, and be more indebted to the removal of an error in judgment, than to any possible success they could have in their pursuits of wealth. Our error in the present case, as in most others, proceeds from partial views, from not taking in the whole. We look only on those above us, which strains our hearts in pursuit, and puts all our faculties painfully on the stretch: whereas if we looked on those below us too, it would abate our ferment, remit our painful intention, and inspire quite new sentiments of our

own state. Now on our own sentiments (which few observe) our happiness depends. It lyes in thoughts, and not in things. Things are opaque bodies, which have no light of their own, and are only capable of reflecting to advantage the gaiety beaming on them from our own hearts. Hence, the very unhappy fly public and pompous scenes of life; because, while gay to others, they are dark to them, and, therefore, more provokingly so than retreat. It is not the man's business, who desires happiness, to encrease his riches, but to give his understanding so just a judgment of things, and his affections so rational a temper, as to know that he could not be more happy, though he were more rich. Nay, some have parted with their riches for the sake of happiness; but, in this, the faith of annals, in the miser's opinion, will labour very much.

The foundation of error in this point, is, all our pains and pleasures are from sense or intagination, and not from reason. Now content is an art; "I have learned to be content," says the Apostle. Neither nature, nor chance, nor circumstances can give it. The whole body of Pagan and Christian ethics are the rules of this art. Now the miser professes an art directly the reverse of it. He is wise (which is another word for happy, in this case), who can say, I have not much, but no man has more, for I have all I want. Socrates said with wit, but with judgment too, "He that needs least, is most like the Gods, who need nothing."

4thly, I am to speak of the vain. This is the most distinguished son of folly, and has the most airy happiness of them all. His brothers beforementioned, though themselves to be laughed at, laugh at him. He seeks his felicity entirely in the opinions of a

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den, and but rarely finds it there; for the world, by his very name, has pronounced against him: from the emptiness of his pursuit, and the thinness of his enjoyment, is he called vain. The former wish at least for something substantial, but his very wish is a reproach.

As the too modest is pained by being in the public eye, he is pained by being out of it. What a vast expence is he at to buy spectators! for to what other end is his splendid person and equipage, his large parks, palaces, rivers, and cascades? how expensive! and how useless! Sense is too narrow, it wants compass to take them in; less things would gratify that more. The understanding condemns them; childish imagination only approves, and that too but for a moment; what are these pageantries, but larger toys with which it plays a while, and then grows weary of them? what are they, but huge monuments of mistake, subjects for popular talk, and an immense tax paid for rumour, for sure it cannot be called fame?

How he gazes on, and touches, and re-touches, and, as it were, solicits his shining ornaments to give him some extraordinary sensation, somewhat adequate to the desire he indulged for, or the expectation he entertained from them! but in vain. They were much more powerful in idea, than they are in fact. It is falling in love with our own mistaken ideas that makes fools and beggars of half mankind.

The vain is a beggar of admiration. Begging is an unrespectable profession; but as we are dependent beings, we must all be beggars in some degree. The scandal therefore of this practice depends on two things, the character of the person from whom, and the value of the things which we beg. Now,

the vain begs from all, even the most ignoble; and he begs nothing; I mean, what turns to no account. He is more noble that asks bread, than he who asks a bow, or the glance of an eye; for that is more worth.

In what does this man lay out the faculties of an immortal soul? that time on which depends eternity? that estate, which, well disposed of, might, in some measure, purchase heaven? What is his serious labour, subtle machinations, ardent desire, and reigning ambition?—to be seen. This ridiculous, but true answer, renders all grave censure almost superfluous. If the world was filled with such as these, all arts, and engines of discipline, and of death, for chastisement of offence, might seem needless; let the law they violate, or the power they offend, but condemn them to retreat.

But to come close to the point. What is it the vain would have? He would be admired; he begs an alms of admiration from every passer by, and his happiness starves without it. Now, what does this desire imply? It implies that he cannot be happy without their leave. Thus is he by choice the most precarious creature on earth. The most precarious is the most wretched, and, therefore, the most precarious by choice, is the most foolish too: if any will deny that the most precarious being is most wretched, let him consider that the reverse, the least precarious being, is the most happy, for that is God: and the farther we are removed from independency and self-sufficiency, the farther we are removed from that standard of wisdom and happiness.

I shall dismiss the vain with one observation more. We ought particularly to guard against this folly, for a reason very particular too. Other vices are

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promoted by vices; but this is often nourished by nature itself.

Thus have I, I think, proved, that the voluptuous is the greatest self-denier; that the ambitious is the greatest slave; that the covetous has no wealth; and that the vain, whose idol is admiration, is the greatest object of contempt.

The considerations which have been alledged to the discredit of human happiness, have been hitherto drawn from general topics; one remains, that is too peculiar. We have lately lost our king; that sad occasion first suggested this subject to me, which now it supports with an unwelcome argument; for when our sovereign fell, nature herself emphatically proclaimed, "That all below is vain." Too powerful a supplement to this discourse!

Who then art thou, who settest thine affections on things below? Art thou greater than the deceased? Dost thou value thyself on thy birth? the most highly descended is no more. Dost thou value thyself on thy riches? the King of Britain is no more. Dost thou value thyself on thy power? the master of the seas, the arbiter of Europe, is no more. Dost thou glory in thy constancy, humanity, affection to thy friend, or encouragement of arts?—But I forbear. It is ambition to be grateful, when princes bestow.

How lately were the eyes of all Europe thrown on this great man? for man let me call him, now, nor contradict the declaration which his mortality has made. They that find him now, must seek for him; and seek for him in the dust. What on earth but must tell us this world is vain, if thrones declare it? if kings, if British kings, are demonstrations of it?

I shall offer one observation on the death of princes, which is full to my present purpose. A throne is the shining period, the golden termination of the worldly man's prospect; his passions affect, his understanding conceives nothing beyond it, or the favours it can bestow. The sun, the expanse of heaven, or what lyes higher, have no lustre in his sight, no room in his pre-engaged imagination: it is all a superfluous waste. When therefore his monarch dies, he is left in darkness, his sun is set, it is the night of ambition with him: which naturally damps him into reflection, and fills that reflection with awful thoughts.

With reverence then be it spoken, what can God in his ordinary means do more, to turn his affections into their right channel, and send them forward to their proper end? Providence, by his king's decease, takes away the very ground on which his delusion rose; it sinks before him; his error is supplanted, nor has his folly whereon to stand; but must return, like the dove in the deluge, to his own bosom again.

By this is he convinced, that his ultimate point of view is not only vain in its nature, but vain in fact; it not only may, but has actually failed. What then is he under a necessity of doing, this boundary of his sight removed? either he must look forward (and what is beyond it but GOD?) or, he must close his eyes in willful darkness, and still repose his trust in things which he has experienced to be vain. Such accidents, therefore, however fatal to his secular, are the mercy of GOD as to his eternal interest, and say with my text, "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth."

Let us now, from the throne, look back, (as from

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eminence), on the former part of our journey : we have passed the several orders, ages, aims, relations, constitutions, tempers, passions, with the four great impulses of mankind, and have found but one sport through the several stages of our course ; the various witnesses concur, and bring in a full verdict against the happiness of human life. They declare that all mankind is united by misery, in some degree, as by (what is less melancholy) the grave, to which it leads.

And can this world enchant us still ? and can we be born for this ? Is this a scene for reason, that emanation of Divinity, to doat on ? Is this the fortune, this the dower, to which we should wed an immortal soul ? Where then is the difference between reason and absurdity ? between immortality and the beasts that perish ? Be this their heaven (as properly it is), but not their LORD's, but not man's.

I shall close this discourse with a picture of life in miniature, that your memories may carry it the better : a picture more melancholy than that of this globe ere well clear of the chaos ; or labouring afterwards under all the wrongs and disgraces that an universal deluge could inflict.

Behold a world ! where the inhabitants are not differenced by happiness and misery ; but only by the different degrees and various colours of misery universal : where the memory is clouded with black ideas of the past ; the imagination overlooks the present ; and the understanding, through mercy, is blinded to the future : where every passion may be called legion, for its evils are many : where men almost universally lay aside intellectual pleasures ; are most ardent desirers of happiness, and yet subsist

Thoughts with regard to the mind.

it on the most impotent half of their natures: where anxiety of thought damps sensual pleasure, and sensual pleasure encreases anxiety of thought, and impairs our strength to support it too: where the soul and the body are in perpetual hostilities, aggravating each other, and external accidents seem superfluous to our misery. Thus the poor man, like devoted Jerusalem, besieged without and divided within, is a complication of infelicities.

Where success must be procured by To externals. our infinite care, and ruin follows on the contrary; so that all the sad choice indulged to mankind, is, of infinite care, or destruction. Besides, the more we have of credit, wealth, or power, the more we may lose; nor is any man entirely free from the apprehensions of it; so that our possessions imply, and provide for our misery. Where an independent pleasure is very severe; a dependent, very frail. Where pleasure often exacts such hardships from her votary, that austerity cannot improve upon them. Where nothing pleasts but in prospect; and to please in prospect only, is not to disappoint alone, but to deride us too. Where what exalts the spirits shortens life by that expence; and what depresses, makes the shortest life too long. Where days are long, yet life is short. Where we stand as in a battle, thousands daily falling round us, and yet we forget our own mortality; nay, are hardened into an insensibility of it, by these very proofs of its approach; and start, like David, when we hear, "Thou art the man." Where experience, which is truly the greatest blessing of life, is the severest discipline of it too; and diversion, which is supposed a blessing, only signifies, that to ourselves we are insupportable. Where sorrow is as the stem

as root of life; joy, but as its flower, expected at remote seasons only, then often blighted, or if it blooms, it blooming dies. Where all is vexatious, or mixed, or fugitive. Where pains assault us, delusions surround us, and terrors hang over us. Where we are restless in pursuit, dissatisfied in fruition, and persecuted with remorse. Where we are ever pursuing, and ever condemning the same things; ever accusing hope of its broken faith, and ever trusting on, ever grasping after sensual enjoyments, and ever impairing our appetite for them. Where objects, as well as appetites decay; or, if they last, last not to us, through the fickleness of our choice. Where we are yearly burying some favourite amusement or pleasure; and they that succeed are less exquisite, and full as mortal. Where we spend most of our days in climbing the hill of our fortune, which suspends, by labour, any serious thought; and when we have climbed it, and are about to change toil for enjoyment, we start to see our grave so near as on t'other side. Where life with most men is to come, till it is past.

Where the grave employments of mankind are but strenuous follies; nor differenced from those of children, but by their magnitude and their guilt. Where the several occupations of life are but fortifications against want, and often frail ones too. Where, among professions, are the lawyer and the soldier, professors of quarrel and death; fortune and life their prey. Where the infirmities of our bodies demand and support one profession; the infirmities of our minds another; and the misadventures of our fortune constitute an ample portion in the whole world of literature. Where the very

To the professions, and nature of things.

elements wage war against us, and have their inundation, shipwreck, earthquake, famine, pestilence, volcanos, and conflagration. Where we cannot make way from our doors, but through the cries of indigence or disease. Where hospitals and bedlams are public necessities. Where the very appellations of a large part of mankind cannot be heard without compassion; widows! and orphans! Where, tears are a distinction of the whole species from other creatures. Where youth often languishes like a tempest-beaten flower, and age shews its injuries like a blasted oak.

Where history, for the most part, is To history. nothing but a large field of misfortune, and to dip into almost any page of it, is to dip into blood; into blood, persecutions, inquisitions, treasons, assassinations, sieges, servitudes: or if sometimes a triumph breaks through this general cloud, as lightning through night, it vanishes almost as soon; and while it lasts, it is a proof and memorial of misery; for what is a triumph, but the gay daughter of destruction and death? Where hard-heartedness and lust, drinking the tears of believing innocence; and self-design and treachery, turning every virtue of others to its own interest, and the good man's ruin, (which abounds in every record), makes peace more cruel than war. Where happiness is such a stranger, that for many ages it was *learning* to seek the true notion of it; and it was but fought; it was not found, but revealed at last. Where the pomps and prancings of the mighty, are but the trappings of woe. Where the most shining and envied characters have few of them died a natural death; but furnish theme of tragedy for succeeding generations. Strange! that the same per-

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sins should be the objects of our envy and pity too! strange too! that we should have sighs sufficient for more miseries than our own. Where the most happy would not repeat their course; and he was justly censured who wept over his mighty army as mortal, because not one of that numerous host but might probably wish, before he found his end. Where, among the many arguments for a future state, the misery of this has been most strongly and universally insisted on in all ages; which demonstrates an acute sense, and too ample a conviction of it. Where crowns have been often abdicated: how often in our own annals is the palace changed for the cloister! Where self-murder, at certain periods, has been a fashion; nay, very extraordinary methods have been taken to restrain even the tender sex from this horror. Where half the travels that have been undertook, half the designs that have been enterprized, half the volumes that have been written, have been refuges from uneasiness of heart; and the last are not more the immortal monuments of human wit, than of human infelicity. Where happiness is an art, and content is an art; what libraries have been written to teach it! Whatever success they have in teaching that, they certainly teach us this, that unhappiness and discontent are natural.

Where a smile is often an ambush, as it was on the face of Domitian, on which it To friendship. seldom shone, but when rancour gathered at his heart. Where enmity is sincere, friendship often a name; and it is ruin to trust those whom not to trust is almost a crime, as a relation, a friend, a brother! Where many fall from credit, fortune, life, with Cæsar's exclamation, "And this from thee?" Where provoking our foes has not ruined half so

many, as confiding in those of a contrary character. He needs no foe who is entirely at the mercy of his friends. Where more hearts pine away in secret anguish for unkindness from those who should be their comforters, than for any other calamity in life. Where bills of mortality would scarce be mournful, if bills of private calamity were in use. Who has not seen, who has not foreseen, nay, who almost has not felt a bleeding heart? Where evil arts usurp the name and port of Wisdom, though scarce worthy to be called Cunning. Now cunning is but the top of a fool's character, and wisdom itself is but the bottom or inferior part of the character of an honest man. *Nulla bona, nisi honesta.*

Where the honest, confiding heart takes a virgin-flower into his bosom, and often finds a

To family
affliction.

sting under it. Where the fond mother to-day looks with transport on the re-

ward of her long labour and painful travail, which changes perhaps to-morrow the cradle for the grave. Where the feeble father follows a favourite, an only daughter, the delight of his eye! the rest of his age! to her long home, which he perhaps has wished for himself in vain; and sheds those tears on her ashes, which should express his joy for the happy disposal of her in life: or perhaps the case is still worse, he sees her youth, and beauty, and innocence, fallen into arms to him more dreadful than those of death. Where the son of some great house, its hope, joy, and support, the sole heir of riches, titles, and golden schemes, falls immaturally, grasped by death, as the pillars were by Samson; and the whole structure is sorely shaken, if it does not follow on his fall. Where many a numerous family lives in innocence, peace, plenty, reputation, under the wing

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of an indulgent, prudent, and industrious father; the father dies, they are scattered like a sheaf of corn when the band is broke, and become the prey of guilt, want, anxiety, and shame. Where the comforts of life have their pangs; their jart, jealousies, interruptions, decays, extinction. Where grudge, animosity, and revenge, wound deep; but deeper (when they wound) relation, friendship, love: for love has its barbarities, and frequently may be mistaken for hatred by its effects. There are sometimes malignant tempers in families; such domestic maladies are like ulcers in the vitals; extremities cannot cure them, they cannot be cut off.

Where the night is an idle dream, and the day little better. Where every one is witness or patient of affliction; ever telling sad tales of others, till he becomes a tale himself; the tale of a day! and then is utterly forgotten. *He lived and died*, is an epitaph for much the greatest part of mankind. Where he that has reached his meridian is one of a thousand, his friends and relations ly dead around him: half of his conversation is gathered from the tomb. What are the gay, young, beautiful, brave, learned, wise, good, in which he once perhaps was rich, what are they? a tale! a sigh! Where youth has the pain of getting, age of leaving its riches; affection being rarely strong enough in us to make the parting with them agreeable. Where fears and pangs only give a relish of the contrary; and our pleasure, generally as it rises from, so it ends in them too. Where the pain of impatience turns us over to the pain of satiety, scarce divided by the moment of delight. Where pain is oftner sunk by new pain, than healed by strengthening pleasure. Where real evils are frequent;

Mixed
thoughts.

imaginary perpetual : and the happiest thanks some other's wretchedness, for putting him in mind that he is not the most wretched himself. Where, I was happy, a few may possibly ; I shall be happy, most say ; I am happy, none : now, if none are happy on the present, it is a demonstration that happiness is absent from us all. The present is all that our parent nature properly gives us ; and that, like peevish children, we will not taste : thus between the law of our condition, and the perverseness of our temper, we have nothing at all ; we are very poor, subsisting, or rather starving our thin happiness on dreams, and shadows of good to come ; perhaps, never to come ; certainly never to come proportionate to our conceptions of them. Where man snatches such quick and terrible resentment from the smallest occasion, that it resembles the discharge of ordnance at the touch of a reed. Where to have any chance for happiness, a man must possess the world, or despise it : now, the contempt of it, in him that possesses it not, is a cheat ; he does not heartily condemn it ; he mistakes his ill-will for contempt ; and, what is as unfortunate, he that possesses it, does condemn it ; but not from wisdom, but weakness, which has not the skill to relish its enjoyments as they deserve. Where proud honour stands in the place of meek religion ; honour that disdains compulsion, and that, consequently, must stand or fall, with inclination and humour : he, therefore, that relies on honour, relies on humour ; and he that relies on humour is a fool, and must be a wretch in the end. Where the two points the world's wise man aims at, are, first to get the better of natural instinct, so as not to be betrayed by it into any humanities, in which he does not find his own immediate account : se-

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edly, to surmount the prejudices and timorousness
 of education, to throw the virtues and vices into one
 heap, like a man; thence to be drawn out, indiffe-
 rently as interest directs; interest, which is his God;
 and his bible, the custom of the world. Where
 many men suppose you a knave, or conclude you a
 fool, and call you so by their professions of disinte-
 rested friendship; by which they only mean to steal
 your affections, and the good effects of them. Where
 compassion, with some, passes for weakness, and you
 must suppress your sighs, as in the theatre, not to
 be laughed at; he is looked on as an idiot, who is
 not above being a man. Where men seek not the
 means of serving, but an excuse for not serving
 others; and words change their nature, and do not
 reveal, but cover the mind; the passions themselves,
 those betrayers of truth, are taught to act a part;
 the very eye can lie; and that natural window of
 the soul has a screen before it, that you may not see
 through; he only who discovers his own interest,
 gives you a key to his heart. In a word, where the
 honest man (who alone is worthy of good) if he
 judges of men by himself, is undone. This may be
 called satire, but, by the same rule, the scripture is
 so too. Where to dissemble injuries is the greatest
 shock to nature, and shame to honour, yet, at the
 same time, the greatest art of life. Where he that
 has not learned the world, must go out of it, or be
 a jest and an unfortunate in it; he that has learned
 it, has learned it with discipline, and by that time
 he is well master of the game, his candle is put out.
 It is hard to learn the world, but harder to unlearn
 it; and not to unlearn it, will, one day, prove more
 fatal. Where we will not believe yesterday, but hope
 favourably from to-morrow; as if then there would

be a new sun, a new nature, a new self: they pray for that, who almost curse its fellow. Where sorrow is fruitless, and laughter is mad. Where, at the several tides of good fortune, the head tells the heart, Well, now we are happy; which the heart scarce believes, or believes it implicitly: whenever we say to ourselves, let us sit down and enjoy life, we discover the cheat, like one deluded by perspective, by bringing it to the touch. Where multitudes (strange! and ridiculous! but for the horror of it) complain they have nothing to do, when every step is a step towards a grave, every minute an approach to an eternity: besides, if men well knew the business of this world, and would acquit themselves like masters in it, want of time would be their great complaint. Nay, he that lays down but this one simple rule, that he will be in the right where-ever he is, or whatever he is about, will never have one idle moment, though he has not the important cares of nations, or even of families, on his hands.

Where the past is a very dream, and the future a sore travel. Where the tender mother sheds tears over her helpless infant, and the careful father pouts groans over them both; groans conscious of the present, and presaging of the future. Where sometimes nations groan, as one man, under a general calamity; nor is the whole earth at all privileged from the severe condition of any one nation of it. Where Nature is perpetually pouring her children in vast tides out of time into eternity; and the survivors take the evil and refuse the good; they are but the more melancholy, not the wiser for it. Where we are born with pain, and die with amazement. Where life is the slave of misery, and yet most strange and deplorable! the King of Terrors is Death.

"Sunt lacrimae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt."

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Almost the whole book of Ecclesiastes might be transcribed as a scriptural support of what is here said; and its author, it is well known, received wisdom as an immediate gift from God, in superiority to all the rest of mankind.

I shall conclude, by saying what is most true, that human life is like a dishonest creditor, it puts off our youth and manhood with lies from day to day, then owns the cheat, and gives our age an absolute denial.

If this account is just, as I think it is, What is human happiness? A word! a notion! a day-dream! a wish! a sigh! a theme to be talked of! a mark to be shot at, but never hit! a picture in the head, and a pang in the heart of man. Wisdom recommends it gravely, learning talks of it pompously, our understanding listens to it eagerly, our affection pursues it warmly, and our experience despairs of it irretrievably. Imagination persuades some that they have found it, but it is while their reason is asleep; pride prevails with others to boast of it; but it is only a boast, by which they may deceive their neighbours, but not themselves: felicity of constitution, and suavity of manners, make the nearest approach to it, but it is only an approach; fortune, the nature of things, the infirmities of the body, the passions of the mind, the dependence on others, the prevalence of vice, the very condition of (uncorrected) humanity forbids an embrace. Wine, beauty, music, pomp, study, diversion, business, wisdom, all that sea or land, nature or art, labour or rest can bestow, are but poor expedients to heave off the insupportable load of an hour from the heart of man; the load of an hour from the heir of an eter-

The description of human happiness.

nity! if the young, or unexperienced, or vain, or profligate only, were subject to this weakness, it were something; but when the learned, and wise, and grave, and grey—it shocks! it mortifies! and with shame and pity, my mind turns from its purpose, and goes backward with reverence to throw a veil over the nakedness of my father. In a word, the true notion of human happiness explained, is itself one of the strongest proofs of our misery. For how can we speak more adequately of it, than by saying, it is that of which our despair is as necessary as our passion for it is vehement and inextinguishable? Now ardently to thirst, and unavoidably to despond, with regard to the same thing, and that thing of consequence supreme, is the consummation of infelicity. I know but one solid pleasure in life, and that is our duty. How miserable then, how unwise, how unpardonable are they, who make that one a pain!

The purpose of this discourse, as expressed in the beginning of it, was to put this world in the balance, and examine the value of things on the earth. Now such as is represented, not aggravated, through the whole preceding discourse, is the general state of mankind; but it is a state of their own choice; and it may be, though not wholly reversed, abundantly relieved, exceedingly brightened from the clouds, the thick darkness that hangs upon it; as I shall endeavour to make manifest in the following discourse*; and thus vindicate Providence from prevailing imputations; and by laying the two counter-parts together, infer a true estimate of human life.

* The second discourse on this subject never appeared.

CONJECTURES
ON
ORIGINAL COMPOSITION.
IN A
LETTER
TO THE
AUTHOR
OF
Sir CHARLES GRANDISON.

Si habet aliquod pabulum studii, et doctrinae, otiosa senectutae nihil est jucundus. Cic.

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SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

DEAR SIR,

WE confess the follies of youth without a blush; not so, those of age. However, keep me a little in countenance, by considering, that age wants amusements more, though it can justify them less, than the preceding periods of life. How you may relish the pastime here sent you, I know not. It is miscellaneous in its nature, somewhat licentious in its conduct; and, perhaps, not over-important in its end. However, I have endeavoured to make some amends, by digressing into subjects more important, and more suitable to my season of life. A serious thought standing single among many of a lighter nature, will sometimes strike the careless wanderer after amusement only, with useful awe: as monumental marbles scattered in a wide pleasure-garden (and such there are) will call to recollection those who would never have sought it in a church-yard walk of mournful yews.

To one such monument I may conduct you, in which is a hidden lustre, like the sepulchral lamp of old; but not like those will this be extinguished, but shine the brighter for being produced, after so long concealment, into open day.

You remember that your worthy patron, and our common friend, put some questions on the serious drama, at the same time when he desired our sentiments on original, and on moral composition. Tho' I despair of breaking through the frozen obstructions of age, and care's incumbent cloud, into that flow of thought, and brightness of expression, which subjects so polite require; yet will I hazard some conjectures on them.

I begin with original composition; and the more willingly, as it seems an original subject to me, who have seen nothing hitherto written on it. But, first, a few thoughts on composition in general. Some are of opinion, that its growth, at present, is too luxuriant; and that the press is overcharged. Overcharged, I think, it could never be, if none were admitted, but such as brought their imprimatur from sound understanding, and the public good. Wit, indeed, however brilliant, should not be permitted to gaze self-enamoured on its useless charms, in that fountain of fame, (if so I may call the press), if beauty is all that it has to boast; but, like the first Brutus, it should sacrifice its most darling offspring to the sacred interests of virtue, and real service of mankind.

This restriction allowed, the more composition the better. To men of letters, and leisure, it is not only a noble amusement, but a sweet refuge; it improves their parts, and promotes their peace: it opens a back-door out of the bustle of this busy and idle

world, into a delicious garden of moral and intellectual fruits and flowers ; the key of which is denied to the rest of mankind. When stung with idle anxieties, or teased with fruitless impertinence, or yawning over insipid diversions, then we perceive the blessing of a lettered recess. With what a gust do we retire to our disinterested and immortal friends in our closet, and find our minds, when applied to some favourite theme, as naturally and as easily quieted and refreshed, as a peevish child (and peevish children are we all till we fall asleep) when laid to the breast ! Our happiness no longer lives on charity ; nor bids fair for a fall, by leaning on that most precarious and thorny pillow, another's pleasure, for our repose. How independent of the world is he, who can daily find new acquaintance, that at once entertain and improve him, in the little world, the minute but fruitful creation, of his own mind !

These advantages Composition affords us, whether we write ourselves, or in more humble amusement peruse the works of others. While we bustle thro' the thronged walks of public life, it gives us a respite, at least, from care ; a pleasing pause of refreshing recollection. If the country is our choice, or fate, there it rescues us from sloth and sensuality, which, like obscene vermin, are apt gradually to creep unperceived into the delightful bowers of our retirement, and to poison all its sweets. Conscious guilt robs the rose of its scent, the lily of its lustre ; and makes an Eden a deflowered and dismal scene.

Moreover, if we consider life's endless evils, what can be more prudent than to provide for consolation under them ? A consolation under them the wisest of men have found in the pleasures of the pen. Witnesses, among many more, Thucydides, Xenophon,

Tully, Ovid, Seneca, Pliny the younger, who says, "In uxoris infirmitate, et amicorum periculo, aut morte turbatus, ad studia, unicum doloris levamentum, confugio." And why not add to these their modern equals, Chaucer, Raleigh, Bacon, Milton, Clarendon, under the same shield, unwounded by misfortune, and nobly smiling in distress?

Composition was a cordial to these under the frowns of Fortune; but evils there are, which her smiles cannot prevent, nor cure. Among these are the languors of old age. If those are held honourable, who in a hand benumbed by time have grasped the just sword in defence of their country; shall they be less esteemed, whose unsteady pen vibrates to the last, in the cause of religion, of virtue, of learning? Both these are happy in this, that by fixing their attention on objects most important, they escape numberless little anxieties, and that *tedium vite* which often hangs so heavy on its evening hours. May not this insinuate some apology for my spilling ink, and spoiling paper, so late in life?

But there are who write with vigour and success, to the world's delight, and their own renown. These are the glorious fruits where genius prevails. The mind of a man of genius is a fertile and pleasant field, pleasant as Elysium, and fertile as Tempe; it enjoys a perpetual spring. Of that spring, originals are the fairest flowers: imitations are of quicker growth, but fainter bloom. Imitations are of two kinds; one of nature, one of authors: the first we call *originals*, and confine the term *imitation* to the second. I shall not enter into the curious enquiry of what is, or is not strictly speaking original; content with what all must allow, that some compositions are more so than others; and the more they are so,

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I say, the better. Originals are, and ought to be great favourites, for they are great benefactors; they extend the republic of letters, and add a new province to its dominion: imitators only give us a sort of duplicates of what we had, possibly much better, before; encreasing the mere drug of books, while all that makes them valuable, knowledge and genius, are at a stand. The pen of an original writer, like Armida's wand, out of a barren waste calls a blooming spring; out of that blooming spring an imitator is a transplant of laurels, which sometimes die on removal, always languish in a foreign soil.

But suppose an imitator to be most excellent (and such there are), yet still he but nobly builds on another's foundation; his debt is, at least, equal to his glory; which, therefore, on the balance, cannot be very great. On the contrary, an original, though but indifferent, (its originality being set aside), yet has something to boast; it is something to say with him in Horace,

"Meo sum pauper in aere;"

and to share ambition with no less than Cæsar, who declared he had rather be the first in a village, than the second at Rome.

Still farther: an imitator shares his crown, if he has one, with the chosen object of his imitation; an original enjoys an undivided applause. An original may be said to be of a vegetable nature; it rises spontaneously from the vital root of genius; it grows, it is not made: imitations are often a sort of manufacture wrought up by those mechanics, art, and labour, out of pre-existent materials not their own.

Again: we read imitation with somewhat of his languor, who listens to a twice-told tale: our spi-

rits rouse at an original; that is a perfect stranger; and all throng to learn what news from a foreign land: and though it comes, like an Indian prince, adorned with feathers only, having little weight; yet of our attention it will rob the more solid, if not equally new: thus every telescope is lifted at a new-discovered star; it makes a hundred astronomers in a moment, and denies equal notice to the sun. But if an original, by being as excellent as new, adds admiration to surprise, then are we at the writer's mercy; on the strong wing of his imagination, we are snatched from Britain to Italy, from climate to climate, from pleasure to pleasure; we have no home, no thought of our own; till the magician drops his pen; and then falling down into ourselves, we awake to flat realities, lamenting the change, like the beggar who dreamed himself a prince.

It is with thoughts as it is with words, and with both as with men; they may grow old, and die. Words tarnished, by passing through the mouths of the vulgar, are laid aside as inelegant and obsolete; so thoughts, when become too common, should lose their currency; and we should send new metal to the mint; that is, new meaning to the press. The division of tongues at Babel did not more effectually debar men from "making themselves a name," (as the Scripture speaks), than the too great concurrence or union of tongues will do for ever. We may as well grow good by another's virtue, or fat by another's food, as famous by another's thought. The world will pay its debt of praise but once; and instead of applauding, explode a second demand as a cheat.

If it is said, that most of the Latin classics, and all the Greek, except, perhaps, Homer, Pindar, and

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Anacreon, are in the number of imitators, yet receive our highest applause; our answer is, that they, though not real, are accidental originals; the works they imitated, few excepted, are lost; they, on their father's decease, enter as lawful heirs on their estates in Fame: the fathers of our copyists are still in possession, and secured in it, in spite of Goths, and flames, by the perpetuating power of the press. Very late must a modern imitator's fame arrive, if it waits for their decease.

An original enters early on reputation: Fame, fond of new glories, sounds her trumpet in triumph at this birth; and yet how few are awakened by it into the noble ambition of like attempts! Ambition is sometimes no vice in life; it is always a virtue in composition. High in the towering Alps is the fountain of the Po; high in fame, and in antiquity, is the fountain of an imitator's undertaking; but the river, and the imitation, humbly creep along the vale. So few are our originals, that, if all other books were to be burnt, the lettered world would resemble some metropolis in flames, where a few incombustible buildings, a fortress, temple, or tower, lift their heads, in melancholy grandeur, amid the mighty ruin. Compared with this conflagration, old Omar lighted up but a small bonfire, when he heated the baths of the Barbarians, for eight months together, with the famed Alexandrian library's inestimable spoils, that no profane book might obstruct the triumphant progress of his holy Alcoran round the globe.

But why are originals so few? not because the writers harvest is over, the great reapers of antiquity having left nothing to be gleaned after them; nor because the human mind's teeming time is past, or

because it is incapable of putting forth unprecedented births; but because illustrious examples engross, prejudice, and intimidate. They engross our attention, and so prevent a due inspection of ourselves; they prejudice our judgment in favour of their abilities, and so lessen the sense of our own; and they intimidate us with the splendor of their renown, and thus under diffidence bury our strength. Nature's impossibilities, and those of diffidence, ly wide asunder.

Let it not be suspected, that I would weakly innuate any thing in favour of the moderns, as compared with ancient authors; no, I am lamenting their great inferiority. But, I think, it is no necessary inferiority; that it is not from divine destination, but from some cause far beneath the moon*: I think that human souls, through all periods, are equal; that due care, and exertion, would set us nearer our immortal predecessors than we are at present; and he who questions and confutes this, will show abilities not a little tending toward a proof of that equality which he denies.

After all, the first ancients had no merit in being originals: they could not be imitators. Modern writers have a choice to make; and therefore have a merit in their power. They may soar in the regions of liberty, or move in the soft fetters of easy imitation; and imitation has as many plausible reasons to urge, as Pleasure had to offer to Hercules. Hercules made the choice of an hero, and so became immortal.

Yet let not assertors of classic excellence imagine, that I deny the tribute it so well deserves. He that admires not ancient authors, betrays a secret he

* Enquiry into the life of Homer, p. 76.

could conceal, and tells the world, that he does not understand them. Let us be as far from neglecting, as from copying, their admirable compositions: favour be their rights, and inviolable their fame. Let our understanding feed on theirs; they afford the noblest nourishment: but let them nourish, not annihilate, our own. When we read, let our imagination kindle at their charms; when we write, let our judgment shut them out of our thoughts: treat even Homer himself, as his royal admirer was treated by the cynic; bid him stand aside, nor shade our composition from the beams of our own genius; for nothing original can rise, nothing immortal can ripen, in any other sun.

Must we then, (you say), not imitate ancient authors? Imitate them, by all means, but imitate aright. He that imitates the divine Iliad, does not imitate Homer; but he who takes the same method which Homer took, for arriving at a capacity of accomplishing a work so great. Tread in his steps to the sole fountain of immortality; drink where he drank, at the true Helicon, that is, at the breast of nature: imitate; but imitate not the composition, but the man. For may not this paradox pass into a maxim? viz. "The less we copy the renowned ancients, we shall resemble them the more."

But possibly you may reply, that you must either imitate Homer, or depart from nature. Not so: for suppose you was to change place, in time, with Homer; then, if you write naturally, you might as well charge Homer with an imitation of you. Can you be said to imitate Homer for writing so, as you would have written, if Homer had never been? As far as a regard to nature, and sound sense, will permit a departure from your great predecessors; so far,

ambitiously, depart from them; the farther from them in similitude, the nearer are you to them in excellence; you rise by it into an original; become a noble collateral, not an humble descendant from them. Let us build our compositions with the spirit, and in the taste, of the ancients; but not with the materials: thus will they resemble the structures of Pericles at Athens, which Plutarch commends for having had an air of antiquity as soon as they were built. All eminence, and distinction, lyes out of the beaten road; excursion and deviation are necessary to find it; and the more remote your path from the highway, the more reputable; if, like poor Gulliver (of whom anon) you fall not into a ditch, in your way to glory.

What glory to come near, what glory to reach, what glory (presumptuous thought!) to surpass our predecessors! And is that then in nature absolutely impossible? Or is it not, rather, contrary to nature to fail in it? Nature herself sets the ladder, all wanting is our ambition to climb; for by the bounty of nature we are as strong as our predecessors; and by the favour of time (which is but another round in nature's scale) we stand on higher ground. As to the first, were they more than men? or are we less? Are not our minds cast in the same mould with those before the flood? The flood affected matter; mind escaped. As to the second; though we are moderns, the world is an ancient; more ancient far, than when they, whom we most admire, filled it with their fame. Have we not their beauties, as stars to guide; their defects, as rocks to be shunned; the judgment of ages on both, as a chart to conduct, and a sure helm to steer us in our passage to greater perfection than theirs? And shall we be

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lapped in our rival pretensions to fame by this just reward?

"Stat contra, dicitque tibi tua pagina, fur es." *Mart.*

It is by a sort of noble contagion, from a general familiarity with their writings, and not by any particular sordid theft, that we can be the better for those who went before us. Hope we from plagiarism, any dominion in literature; as that of Rome arose from a nest of thieves?

Rome was a powerful ally to many states; ancient authors are our powerful allies; but we must take heed that they do not succour, till they enslave, after the manner of Rome. Too formidable an idea of their superiority, like a spectre, would fright us out of a proper use of our wits; and dwarf our understandings, by making a giant of theirs. Too great awe for them lays genius under restraint, and denies it that free scope, that full elbow-room, which is requisite for striking its most masterly strokes. Genius is a master workman, learning is but an instrument; and an instrument, though most valuable, yet not always indispensable. Heaven will not admit of a partner in the accomplishment of some favourite spirits; but rejecting all human means, assumes the whole glory to itself. Have not some, though not famed for erudition, so written, as almost to persuade us, that they shone brighter, and soared higher, for escaping the boasted aid of that proud ally!

Nor is it strange; for what, for the most part, mean we by genius, but the power of accomplishing great things without the means generally reputed necessary to that end? A genius differs from a good understanding, as a magician from a good architect: that raises his structure by means invisible; this, by

the skilful use of common tools. Hence genius has ever been supposed to partake of something divine. "Nemo unquam vir magnus fuit, sine aliquo afflato divino."

Learning, destitute of this superior aid, is fond, and proud, of what has cost it much pains; is a great lover of rules, and boaster of famed examples: as beauties less perfect, who owe half their charms to cautious art, learning inveighs against natural, unstudied graces, and small harmless inaccuracies, and sets rigid bounds to that liberty, to which genius often owes its supreme glory, but the no-genius its frequent ruin: for unprescribed beauties, and unexampl'd excellence, which are characteristics of genius, by without the pale of learning's authorities and laws; which pale, genius must leap to come at them: but by that leap, if genius is wanting, we break our necks; we lose that little credit, which possibly we might have enjoyed before: for rules, like crutches, are a needful aid to the lame, though an impediment to the strong. A Homer cast them away; and, like his Achilles,

"Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non arrogat,"

by native force of mind. There is something in poetry beyond prose-reason; there are mysteries in it not to be explained, but admired; which render mere prose-men infidels to their divinity. And here pardon a second paradox; viz. "Genius often then deserves most to be praised, when it is most sure to be condemned; that is, when its excellence, from mounting high, to weak eyes is quite out of sight."

If I might speak farther of learning, and genius, I would compare genius to virtue, and learning to

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As riches are most wanted where there is least virtue, so learning where there is least genius. As virtue without much riches can give happiness, so genius without much learning can give renown. As it is said in Terence, "*Pecuniam negligere interdum maximum est lucrum;*" so to a neglect of learning, genius sometimes owes its greater glory. Genius, therefore, leaves but the second place, among men of letters, to the learned. It is their merit, and ambition, to sling light on the works of genius, and point out its charms. We most justly reverence their informing radius for that favour; but we must much more admire the radiant stars pointed out by them.

A star of the first magnitude among the Moderns was Shakespear; among the Ancients, Pindar; who (as Vossius tells us) boasted of his no-learning, calling himself the Eagle, for his flight above it. And such genii as these may, indeed, have much reliance on their own native powers. For genius may be compared to the natural strength of the body; learning to the superinduced accoutrements of arms: if the first is equal to the proposed exploit, the latter rather incumbers, than assists; rather retards, than promotes the victory. "*Sacer nobis inest Deus,*" says Seneca. With regard to the moral world, conscience; with regard to the intellectual, genius, is that god within. Genius can set us right in composition, without the rules of the learned; as conscience sets us right in life, without the laws of the land: this, singly, can make us good, as men: that, singly, as writers, can, sometimes, make us great.

I say, sometimes, because there is a genius which stands in need of learning to make it shine. Of ge-

nus there are two species, an earlier, and a later; or call them infantine, and adult. An adult genius comes out of Nature's hand, as Pallas out of Jove's head, at full growth, and mature: Shakespear's genius was of this kind: on the contrary, Swift stumbled at the threshold, and set out for distinction on feeble knees; he was an infantine genius; a genius which, like other infants, must be nursed and educated, or it will come to nought: learning is its nurse and tutor; but this nurse may overlay with an indigested load, which smother's common sense; and this tutor may mislead, with pedantic prejudice, which vitiates the best understanding. As too great admirers of the fathers of the church have sometimes set up their authority against the true sense of the scripture; so too great admirers of the classical fathers have sometimes set up their authority, or example, against reason.

"Neve minor, neu sit quinto productior acta
"Fabula."

So says Horace, so says ancient example. But reason has not subscribed. I know but one book that can justify our implicit acquiescence in it: and (by the way) on that book a noble disdain of undue deference to prior opinion has lately cast, and is still casting, a new and inestimable light.

But, superstition for our predecessors set aside, the classics are for ever our rightful and revered masters in composition, and our understandings bow before them; but when? when a master is wanted; which sometimes, as I have shown, is not the case. Some are pupils of Nature only, nor go farther to school: from such we reap often a double advantage; they not only rival the reputation of the great ancient

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authors, but also reduce the number of mean ones among the moderns. For when they enter on subjects which have been in former hands, such is their superiority, that, like a tenth wave, they overwhelm and bury in oblivion all that went before: and thus not only enrich and adorn, but remove a load, and lessen the labour of the lettered world.

"But, (say you), since originals can arise from genius only, and since genius is so very rare, it is scarce worth while to labour a point so much, from which we can reasonably expect so little." To show that genius is not so very rare as you imagine, I shall point out strong instances of it in a far distant quarter from that mentioned above. The minds of the schoolmen were almost as much cloistered as their bodies; they had but little learning and few books; yet may the most learned be struck with some astonishment at their so singular natural sagacity, and most exquisite edge of thought. Who would expect to find Pindar and Scotus, Shakespear and Aquinas, of the same party? both equally show an original, unindebted energy; the *vigor igneus*, and *caelestis crigo*, burns in both, and leaves us in doubt whether genius is more evident in the sublime flights and beauteous flowers of poetry, or in the profound penetration, and marvellous keen and minute distinctions, called the thorns of the schools. There might have been more able consuls called from the plough, than ever arrived at that honour: many a genius, probably, there has been, which could neither write nor read. So that genius, that supreme lustre of literature, is less rare than you conceive.

By the praise of genius we detract not from learning; we detract not from the value of gold, by say-

ing that diamond is greater still. He who dis-
gards learning, shows that he wants its aid : and
he that overvalues it, shows that its aid has done
him harm. Overvalued indeed it cannot be, if ge-
nius, as to composition, is valued more. Learning
we thank, genius we revere ; that gives us pleasure,
this gives us rapture ; that informs, this inspires ;
and is itself inspired ; for genius is from heaven,
learning from man : this sets us above the low, and
illiterate ; that, above the learned, and polite.
Learning is borrowed knowledge ; genius is know-
ledge innate, and quite our own. Therefore, as
Bacon observes, it may take a nobler name, and be
called wisdom ; in which sense of wisdom, some are
born wise.

But here a caution is necessary against the most
fatal of errors in those automaths, those self-taught
philosophers of our age, who set up genius, and
often mere fancied genius, not only above human
learning, but divine truth. I have called genius
wisdom ; but let it be remembered, that in the most
renowned ages of the most refined heathen wisdom
(and theirs is not Christian) " the world by wisdom
" knew not God, and it pleased God by the foolish-
" ness of preaching to save those that believed." In
the fairyland of fancy, genius may wander wild ;
there it has a creative power, and may reign arbitra-
rily over its own empire of chimeras. The wide
field of nature also lyes open before it, where it may
range unconfined, make what discoveries it can, and
sport with its infinite objects uncontrouled, as far as
visible nature extends, painting them as wantonly
as it will : but what painter of the most unbounded
and exalted genius can give us the true portrait of
a seraph ? He can give us only what by his own, or

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where eyes, has been seen; though that indeed instantly compounded, raised, burlesqued, dishonoured, and scorned. In like manner, who can give us divine truth unredeemed? much less should any presume to set aside divine truth when revealed, as incongruous to their own sagacities.—Is this too serious for my subject? I shall be more so before I close.

Having put in a caveat against the most fatal of errors, from the too great indulgence of genius, return we now to that too great suppression of it, which is detrimental to composition, and endeavour to rescue the writer, as well as the man. I have said, that some are born wise; but they, like those that are born rich, by neglecting the cultivation and produce of their own possessions, and by running in debt, may be beggared at last, and lose their reputations, as younger brothers estates, not by being born with less abilities than the rich heir, but at too late an hour.

Many a great man has been lost to himself and the public, purely because great ones were born before him. Hermias, in his collections on Homer's blindness, says, that Homer, requesting the gods to grant him a sight of Achilles, that hero rose, but in armour so bright, that it struck Homer blind with the blaze. Let not the blaze of even Homer's muse darken us to the discernment of our own powers; which may possibly set us above the rank of imitators; who, though most excellent, and even immortal (as some of them are) yet are still but *Dii minorum gentium*, nor can expect the largest share of incense, the greatest profusion of praise, on their secondary altars.

But farther still: a spirit of imitation hath many ill effects; I shall confine myself to three. First, It deprives the liberal and politer arts of an advantage

which the mechanic enjoy : in these men are ever endeavouring to go beyond their predecessors ; in the former, to follow them. And since copies surpass not their originals, as streams rise not higher than their spring, rarely so high ; hence, while arts mechanic are in perpetual progress and encrease, the liberal are in retrogradation, and decay. These resemble pyramids, are broad at bottom, but lessen exceedingly as they rise ; those resemble rivers, which, from a small fountain-head, are spreading ever wider and wider, as they run. Hence it is evident, that different portions of understanding are not (as some imagine) allotted to different periods of time ; for we see, in the same period, understanding rising in one set of artists, and declining in another. Therefore nature stands absolved, and our inferiority in composition must be charged on ourselves.

Nay, so far are we from complying with a necessity which nature lays us under, that, secondly, by a spirit of imitation we counteract nature, and thwart her design. She brings us into the world all originals : no two faces, no two minds, are just alike ; but all bear nature's evident mark of separation on them. Born originals, how comes it to pass that we die copies ? That meddling ape Imitation, as soon as we come to years of indiscretion (so let me speak), snatches the pen, and blots out nature's mark of separation, cancels her kind intention, destroys all mental individuality ; the lettered world no longer consists of singulars, it is a medley, a mass ; and a hundred books at bottom are but one. Why are monkeys such masters of mimicry ? why receive they such a talent at imitation ? Is it not as the Spartan slaves received a licence for ebriety, that their betters might be ashamed of it ?

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The third fault to be found with a spirit of imitation is, that with great incongruity it makes us poor, and proud; makes us think little, and write much; gives us huge folios, which are little better than more reputable cushions to promote our repose. Have not some sevenfold volumes put us in mind of Ovid's sevenfold channel of the Nile at the conflagration;

"*Ostia septem*

"*Pulverulenta vacant septem sine flumine valles.*"

Such leaden labours are like Lycurgus's iron money, which was so much less in value than in bulk, that it required barns for strong-boxes, and a yoke of oxen to draw five hundred pounds.

But notwithstanding these disadvantages of imitation, imitation must be the lot (and often an honourable lot it is) of most writers. If there is a famine of invention in the land, like Joseph's brethren, we must travel far for food; we must visit the remote and rich ancients: but an inventive genius may safely stay at home; that, like the widow's cruise, is divinely replenished from within, and affords us a miraculous delight. Whether our own genius be such, or not, we diligently should enquire, that we may not go a-begging with gold in our purse: for there is a mine in man which must be deeply dug, ere we can conjecture its contents. Another often sees that in us which we see not ourselves; and may there not be that in us which is unseen by both? That there may, chance often discovers, either by a luckily chosen theme, or a mighty premium, or an absolute necessity of exertion, or a noble stroke of emulation from another's glory; as that on Thucydides, from hearing Herodotus repeat

part of his history at the Olympic games: had there been no Herodotus, there might have been no Thucydides, and the world's admiration might have begun at Livy, for excellence in that province of the pen. Demosthenes had the same stimulation on hearing Callistratus; or Tully might have been the first of consummate renown at the bar.

Quite clear of the dispute concerning ancient and modern learning, we speak not of performance, but powers. The modern powers are equal to those before them; modern performance in general is deplorably short. How great are the names just mentioned? Yet who will dare affirm, that as great may not rise up in some future, or even in the present age? Reasons there are why talents may not appear, none why they may not exist as much in one period as another: an evocation of vegetable fruits depends on rain, air, and sun; an evocation of the fruits of genius no less depends on externals. What a marvellous crop bore it in Greece and Rome! and what a marvellous sunshine did it there enjoy! what encouragement from the nature of their governments, and the spirit of their people! Virgil and Horace owed their divine talents to Heaven; their immortal works to men: thank Mæcenas and Augustus for them. Had it not been for these, the genius of those poets had lain buried in their ashes. Athens expended on her theatre, painting, sculpture, and architecture, a tax levied for the support of a war. Cæsar dropped his papers when Tully spoke; and Philip trembled at the voice of Demosthenes: and has there arisen but one Tully, one Demosthenes, in so long a course of years? The powerful eloquence of them both in one stream, should never bear me down into the melancholy persuasion, that several

have not been born, though they have not emerged. The sun as much exists in a cloudy day as in a clear; it is outward, accidental circumstances, that withhold genius either in nation, or age,

"Collectas fugat nubes, solemque reducit." *Virg.*

As great, perhaps greater, than those mentioned (presumptuous as it may sound) may possibly arise; for who hath fathomed the mind of man? Its bounds are as unknown as those of the creation; since the birth of which, perhaps, not one has so far exerted, as not to leave his possibilities beyond his attainments, his powers beyond his exploits. Forming our judgments altogether by what has been done, without knowing, or at all enquiring what possibly might have been done, we naturally enough fall into too mean an opinion of the human mind. If a sketch of the divine Iliad before Homer wrote, had been given to mankind by some superior being, or otherwise, its execution would probably have appeared beyond the power of man: now, to surpass it we think impossible. As the first of these opinions would evidently have been a mistake, why may not the second be so too? Both are founded on the same bottom; on our ignorance of the possible dimensions of the mind of man.

Nor are we only ignorant of the dimensions of the human mind in general, but even of our own. That a man may be scarce less ignorant of his own powers, than an oyster of its pearl, or a rock of its diamond; that he may possess dormant, unsuspected abilities, till awakened by loud calls, or stung up by striking emergencies, is evident from the sudden eruption of some men out of perfect obscurity, into public admiration, on the strong impulse of some animating occasion; not more to the world's great surprise, than

their own. Few authors of distinction but have experienced something of this nature, at the first beamings of their yet unsuspected genius on their hitherto dark composition: the writer starts at it, as at a lucid meteor in the night; is much surpris'd; can scarce believe it true. During his happy confusion, it may be said to him as to Eve at the lake,

"What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself."

Milt.

Genius, in this view, is like a dear friend in our company under disguise; who, while we are lamenting his absence, drops his mask, striking us, at once, with equal surpris and joy. This sensation, which I speak of in a writer, might favour, and so promote the fable of poetic inspiration: a poet of a strong imagination, and stronger vanity, on feeling it, might naturally enough realize the world's mere compliment, and think himself truly inspired: which is not improbable; for enthusiasts of all kinds do no less.

Since it is plain that men may be strangers to their own abilities, and by thinking meanly of them without just cause, may possibly lose a name, perhaps a name immortal, I would find some means to prevent these evils. Whatever promotes virtue, promotes something more, and carries its good influence beyond the moral man: to prevent these evils, I borrow two golden rules from ethics, which are no less golden in composition than in life. 1st, Know thyself: 2dly, Reverence thyself. I design to repay ethics in a future letter, by two rules from rhetoric for its service.

1st, Know thyself. Of ourselves it may be said, as Martial says of a bad neighbour,

"Nil tam prope, proculque nobis."

Therefore dive deep into thy bosom; learn the depth,

alent, bias, and full force of thy mind; contract full intimacy with the stranger within thee; excite and cherish every spark of intellectual light and heat, however smothered under former negligence, or scattered thro' the dull, dark mass of common thoughts; and collecting them into a body, let thy genius rise (if a genius thou hast) as the sun from chaos; and if I should then say, like an Indian, worship it, (tho' too bold), yet should I say little more than my second rule enjoins, (*viz.*) Reverence thyself:

That is, let not great examples or authorities browbeat thy reason into too great a diffidence of thyself: thyself so reverence, as to prefer the native growth of thy own mind to the richest import from abroad; such borrowed riches make us poor. The man who thus reverences himself, will soon find the world's reverence to follow his own. His works will stand distinguished; his the sole property of them; which property alone can confer the noble title of an Author; that is, of one who (to speak accurately) thinks, and composes; while other invaders of the press, how voluminous and learned soever, (with due respect be it spoken) only read and write.

This is the difference between those two luminaries in literature, the well-accomplished scholar, and the divinely-inspired enthusiast; the first is, as the bright morning star; the second, as the rising sun. The writer who neglects those two rules above, will never stand alone; he makes one of a group, and thinks in wretched unanimity with the throng: incumbered with the notions of others, and impoverished by their abundance, he conceives not the least embryo of new thought; opens not the least vista thro' the gloom of ordinary writers, into the bright walks of rare imagination, and singular design; while

the true genius is crossing all public roads into fresh untrodden ground; he, up to the knees in antiquity, is treading the sacred footsteps of great examples, with the blind veneration of a bigot saluting the papal toe; comfortably hoping full absolution for the sins of his own understanding, from the powerful charm of touching his idol's infallibility.

Such meanness of mind, such prostration of our own powers, proceeds from too great admiration of others. Admiration has generally a degree of two very bad ingredients in it; of ignorance, and of fear; and does mischief in composition, and in life. Proud as the world is, there is more superiority in it given than assumed; and its grandees of all kinds owe more of their elevation to the littleness of other minds, than to the greatness of their own. Were not prostrate spirits their voluntary pedestals, the figure they make among mankind would not stand so high. Imitators and translators are somewhat of the pedestal-kind, and sometimes rather raise their original's reputation, by showing him to be by them inimitable, than their own. Homer has been translated into most languages: Ælian tells us, that the Indians (hopeful tutors!) have taught him to speak their tongue. What expect we from them? Not Homer's Achilles, but something, which, like Patroclus, assumes his name, and, at his peril, appears in his stead: nor expect we Homer's Ulysses, gloriously bursting out of his cloud into royal grandeur; but an Ulysses under disguise, and a beggar to the last. Such is that inimitable father of poetry, and oracle of all the wise, whom Lysurgus transcribed; and for an annual public recital of whose works Solon enacted a law; that it is much to be feared, that his so numerous translations are but as the published testi-

minerals of so many nations and ages, that this author so divine is untranslated still.

But here,

"—Cyntheus aurem

"Vellit;"—

Virg.

and demands justice for his favourite, and ours. Great things he has done; but he might have done greater. What a fall is it from Homer's numbers, free as air, lofty and harmonious as the spheres, into childish shackles, and tinkling sounds! But, in his fall, he is still great——

"—Nor appears

"Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess

"Of glory' obscur'd."—

Milt.

Had Milton never wrote, Pope had been less to blame; but when in Milton's genius, Homer, as it were, personally rose to forbid Britons doing him that ignoble wrong; it is less pardonable, by that effeminate decoration, to put Achilles in petticoats a second time. how much nobler had it been, if his numbers had rolled on in full flow, through the various modulations of masculine melody, into those grandeurs of solemn sound, which are indispensibly demanded by the native dignity of heroic song! how much nobler, if he had resisted the temptation of that Gothic dæmon, which modern poesy tasting, became mortal! O how unlike the deathless, divine harmony of three great names (how justly joined!) of Milton, Greece, and Rome! his verse, but for this little speck of mortality in its extreme parts, as his hero had in his heel, like him had been invulnerable, and immortal. But, unfortunately, that was undipt in Helicon; as this, in Styx. Harmony as well as eloquence is essential to poesy; and a

murder of his muse is putting half Homer to death. Blank is a term of diminution; what we mean by blank verse, is, verse unfallen, uncursed; verse reclaimed, reinthroned in the true language of the gods; who never thundered, nor suffered their Homer to thunder in rhyme: and therefore, I beg you, my friend, to crown it with some nobler term; nor let the greatness of the thing lie under the defamations of such a name.

But supposing Pope's Iliad to have been perfect in its kind; yet it is a translation still; which differs as much from an original, as the moon from the sun.

——“Phœben alieno jusserat igne

“Impleri, solemque suo.”

Claud.

But as nothing is more easy than to write originally wrong; originals are not here recommended, but under the strong guard of my first rule—Know thyself. Lucian, who was an original, neglected not this rule, if we may judge by his reply to one who took some freedom with him. He was, at first, an apprentice to a statuary; and when he was reflected on as such, by being called Prometheus, he replied, “I am indeed the inventor of a new work, the model of which I owe to none; and, if I do not execute it well, I deserve to be torn by twelve vultures, instead of one.”

If so, O Gulliver! dost thou not shudder at thy brother Lucian's vultures hovering over thee? Shudder on! they cannot shock thee more, than decency has been shocked by thee. How have thy Houyhnhnms thrown thy judgment from its seat, and laid thy imagination in the mire! in what or-

you hast thou dipped thy pencil! What a monster
hast thou made of the

Human face divine!" *Mila.*

This writer has so satirised human nature, as to give a demonstration in himself, that it deserves to be satirised: but, say his wholesale admirers, Few could so have written: true, and fewer would. If it required great abilities to commit the fault, greater still would have saved him from it. But whence arise such warm advocates for such a performance? From hence, viz. before a character is established, merit makes fame; afterwards, fame makes merit. Swift is not commended for this piece, but this piece for Swift. He has given us some beauties which deserve all our praise: and our comfort is, that his faults will not become common; for none can be guilty of them, but who have wit as well as reputation to spare. His wit had been less wild, if his temper had not jostled his judgment. If his favourite Houyhnhnms could write, and Swift had been one of them, every horse with him would have been an ass, and he would have written a panegyric on mankind, saddling with much reproach the present heroes of his pen; on the contrary, being born amongst men, and, of consequence, piqued by many, and peevish at more, he has blasphemed a nature little lower than that of angels, and assumed by far higher than they. But surely the contempt of the world is not a greater virtue, than the contempt of mankind: is a vice. Therefore I wonder that, though forborn by others, the laughter-loving Swift was not reprov'd by the venerable Dean, who could sometimes be very grave.

For I remember, as I and others were taking with

him an evening's walk, about a mile out of Dublin, he stopped short; we passed on: but perceiving that he did not follow us, I went back, and found him fixed as a statue, and earnestly gazing upward at a noble elm, which in its uppermost branches was much withered and decayed. Pointing at it, he said, "I shall be like that tree, I shall die at top." As in this he seemed to prophesy like the Sybils; if, like one of them, he had burnt part of his works, especially this blasted branch of a noble genius, like her too, he might have risen in his demand for the rest.

Would not his friend Pope have succeeded better in an original attempt? Talents untried, are talents unknown. All that I know, is, that, contrary to these sentiments, he was not only an avowed professor of imitation, but a zealous recommender of it also. Nor could he recommend any thing better, except emulation to those who write. One of these, all writers must call to their aid; but aids they are of unequal repute. Imitation is inferiority confessed; emulation is superiority contested, or denied; imitation is servile, emulation generous; that fetters, this fires; that may give a name, this, a name immortal: this made Athens to succeeding ages the rule of taste, and the standard of perfection. Her men of genius struck fire against each other; and kindled, by conflict, into glories, which no time shall extinguish. We thank Eschylus for Sophocles; and Parrhasius for Zeuxis; emulation, for both. That bids us fly the general fault of imitators; bids us not be struck with the loud report of former fame, as with a knell, which damps the spirits; but as with a trumpet, which inspires ardor to rival the renowned. Emulation exhorts us, instead of learning our discipline

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master, like raw troops under ancient leaders in composition, to put those laurel'd veterans in some kind of losing their superior posts in glory.

Such is emulation's high-spirited advice, such her immortalizing call. Pope would not hear, pre-engaged with imitation, which blessed him with all her charms. He chose rather, with his namesake of Greece, to triumph in the old world, than to look out for a new. His taste partook the error of his religion; it denied not worship to saints and angels; that is, to writers, who, canonized for ages, have received their apotheosis from established and universal fame. True poesy, like true religion, abhors idolatry: and though it honours the exemplary, and takes them willingly (yet cautiously) as guides in the way to glory; real, though unexampled, excellence is its only aim; nor looks it for any inspiration less than divine.

Though Pope's noble muse may boast her illustrious descent from Homer, Virgil, Horace, yet is an original author more nobly born. As Tacitus says of Curtius Rufus, an original author is born of himself, is his own progenitor, and will probably propagate a numerous offspring of imitators, to eternize his glory; while mule-like imitators die without issue. Therefore, though we stand much obliged for his giving us an Homer, yet had he doubled his obligation, by giving us——a Pope. Had he a strong imagination, and the true sublime? That granted, we might have had two Homers instead of one, if longer had been his life; for I heard the dying swan talk over an epic plan a few weeks before his decease.

Bacon, under the shadow of whose great name I would shelter my present attempt in favour of origi-

nals, says, "Men seek not to know their own stock
 "and abilities; but fancy their possessions to be
 "greater, and their abilities less, than they really
 "are." Which is in effect saying, "That we
 "ought to exert more than we do: and that, on
 "exertion, our probability of success is greater
 "than we conceive."

Nor have I Bacon's opinion only, but his assistance too, on my side. His mighty mind travelled round the intellectual world; and, with a more than eagle's eye, saw, and has pointed out, blank spaces, or dark spots in it, on which the human mind never shone: some of those have been enlightened since; some are benighted still.

Moreover, so boundless are the bold excursions of the human mind, that, in the vast void beyond real existence, it can call forth shadowy beings, and unknown worlds, as numerous, as bright, and perhaps as lasting, as the stars; such quite original beauties we may call paradisaical,

"Natos sine semine flores."

Ovid.

When such an ample area for renowned adventure in original attempts lies before us, shall we be as mere leaden pipes, conveying to the present age small streams of excellence, from its grand reservoir in antiquity; and those too, perhaps, muddled in the pass? Originals shine like comets; have no peer in their path; are rivalled by none, and the gaze of all; all other compositions (if they shine at all) shine in clusters; like the stars in the galaxy: where, like bad neighbours, all suffer from all; each particular being diminished, and almost lost, in the throng.

If thoughts of this nature prevailed; if ancients and moderns were no longer considered as masters

and pupils, but as hard matched rivals for renown; then moderns, by the longevity of their labours, might, one day, become antients themselves: and old time, that best weigher of merits, to keep his balance even, might have the golden weight of an Augustan age in both his scales: or rather our scale might descend; and that of antiquity (as a modern match for it strongly speaks) might kick the beam.

And why not? For, consider, since an impartial Providence scatters talents indifferently, as through all orders of persons, so through all periods of time; since a marvellous light, unenjoyed of old, is poured on us by revelation, with larger prospects extending our understanding, with brighter objects enriching our imagination, with an inestimable prize setting our passions on fire, thus strengthening every power that enables composition to shine; since there has been no fall in man on this side Adam, who left no works, and the works of all other ancients are our auxiliaries against themselves, as being perpetual spurs to our ambition, and shining lamps in our path to fame; since this world is a school, as well for intellectual, as moral, advance; and the longer human nature is at school, the better scholar it should be; since, as the moral world expects its glorious millenium, the world intellectual may hope, by the rules of analogy, for some superior degrees of excellence to crown her latter scenes; nor may it only hope, but must enjoy them too; for Tully, Quintilian, and all true critics allow, that virtue assists genius, and that the writer will be more able, when better is the man — All these particulars, I say, considered, why should it seem altogether impossible, that Heaven's latest editions of the human mind may be the most

correct and fair; that the day may come, when the moderns may proudly look back on the comparative darkness of former ages, on the children of antiquity; reputing Homer and Demosthenes, as the dawn of divine genius; and Athens as the cradle of infant fame? What a glorious revolution would this make in the rolls of renown!

What a rant, say you, is here?—I partly grant it: yet, consider, my friend! knowledge physical, mathematical, moral, and divine, increases; all arts and sciences are making considerable advance; with them, all the accommodations, ornaments, delights, and glories of human life; and these are new food to the genius of a polite writer; these are as the root, and composition as the flower; and as the root spreads, and thrives, shall the flower fail? As well may a flower flourish, when the root is dead. It is prudence to read, genius to relish, glory to surpass, ancient authors; and wisdom to try our strength, in an attempt in which it would be no great dishonour to fail.

Why condemned Maro his admirable epic to the flames? Was it not because his discerning eye saw some length of perfection beyond it? And what he saw, may not others reach? And who bid fairer than our countrymen for that glory? Something new may be expected from Britons particularly; who seem not to be more severed from the rest of mankind by the surrounding sea, than by the current in their veins; and of whom little more appears to be required in order to give us originals, than a consistency of character, and making their compositions of a piece with their lives. May our genius shine; and proclaim us, in that nobler view,

“—minima contentos nocte Britannos.”

Virg.

And so it does; for in polite composition, in natural and mathematical knowledge, we have great originals already: Bacon, Boyle, Newton, Shakespear, Milton, have showed us, that all the winds cannot blow the British flag farther, than an original spirit can convey the British fame; their names go round the world; and what foreign genius strikes not as they pass? Why should not their posterity embark in the same bold bottom of new enterprize, and hope the same success? Hope it they may; or you must assert, either that those originals, which we already enjoy, were written by angels, or deny that we are men. As Simonides said to Pausanias, reason should say to the writer, "Remember thou art a man." And for man not to grasp at all which is laudable within his reach, is a dishonour to human nature, and a disobedience to the divine; for as Heaven does nothing in vain, its gift of talents implies an injunction of their use.

A friend of mine has obeyed that injunction; he has relied on himself; and with a genius, as well moral, as original, (to speak in bold terms), has cast out evil spirits, has made a convert to virtue of a species of composition, once most its foe: as the first Christian emperors expelled demons, and dedicated their temples to the living God.

But you, I know, are sparing in your praise of this author; therefore I will speak of one which is sure of your applause. Shakespear mingled no water with his wine; lowered his genius by no vapid imitation; Shakespear gave us a Shakespear, nor could the first in ancient fame have given us more. Shakespear is not their son, but brother; their equal; and that in spite of all his faults. Think you this too bold? Consider, in those ancients what is it the world ad-

mires? Not the fewness of their faults, but the number and brightness of their beauties; and if Shakespear is their equal (as he doubtless is) in that, which in them is admired, then is Shakespear as great as they; and not impotence, but some other cause, must be charged with his defects. When we are setting these great men in competition, what but the comparative size of their genius is the subject of our inquiry? And a giant loses nothing of his size, though he should chance to trip in his race. But it is a compliment to those heroes of antiquity to suppose Shakespear their equal only in dramatic powers; therefore, though his faults had been greater, the scale would still turn in his favour. There is at least as much genius on the British as on the Grecian stage, though the former is not swept so clean; so clean from violations not only of the dramatic, but moral rule; for an honest heathen, on reading some of our celebrated scenes, might be seriously concerned to see, that our obligations to the religion of Nature were cancelled by Christianity.

Johnson, in the serious drama, is as much an imitator, as Shakespear is an original. He was very learned, as Samson was very strong, to his own hurt: blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himself under it; we see nothing of Johnson, nor indeed of his admired (but also murdered) ancients; for what shone in the historian is a cloud on the poet; and Cataline might have been a good play, if Sallust had never writ.

Who knows whether Shakespear might not have thought less, if he had read more? Who knows if he might not have laboured under the load of Johnson's learning, as Enceladus under *Ætna*? His mighty ge-

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mis, indeed, through the most mountainous oppres-
 sion would have breathed out some of his inextin-
 guishable fire ; yet, possibly, he might not have risen
 up into that giant, that much more-than common
 man, at which we now gaze with amazement and
 delight. Perhaps he was as learned as his dramatic
 province required ; for whatever other learning he
 wanted, he was master of two books, unknown to
 many of the profoundly read, though books which
 the last conflagration alone can destroy ; the book of
 nature, and that of man. These he had by heart,
 and has transcribed many admirable pages of them
 into his immortal works. These are the fountain-
 head whence the Castalian streams of original com-
 position flow ; and these are often mudded by other
 waters, though waters, in their distinct channel, most
 wholesome and pure : as two chymical liquors, sepa-
 rately clear as crystal, grow foul by mixture, and of-
 fend the sight. So that he had not only as much
 learning as his dramatic province required, but, per-
 haps, as it could safely bear. If Milton had spared
 some of his learning, his muse would have gained
 more glory than he would have lost by it.

Dryden, destitute of Shakespear's genius, had al-
 most as much learning as Johnson, and, for the bu-
 skin, quite as little taste. He was a stranger to the
 pathos ; and, by numbers, expression, sentiment,
 and every other dramatic cheat, strove to make a-
 mends for it : as if a saint could make amends for
 the want of conscience ; a soldier for the want of
 valour ; or a vestal of modesty. The noble nature of
 tragedy disclaims an equivalent ; like virtue, it de-
 mands the heart ; and Dryden had none to give.
 Let epic poets think, the tragedian's point is rather
 to feel ; such distant things are a tragedian and a

poet, that the latter indulged, destroys the former. Look on Barnwell and Esser, and see how as to these distant characters Dryden excels, and is excelled. But the strongest demonstration of his not-taste for the buskin, are his tragedies fringed with rhyme; which, in epic poetry, is a fore disease, in the tragic, absolute death. To Dryden's enormity, Pope's was a light offence. As lacemen are foes to mourning, these two authors, rich in rhyme, were no great friends to those solemn ornaments which the noble nature of their works required.

Must rhyme then, (say you), be banished? I wish the nature of our language could bear its entire expulsion: but our lesser poetry stands in need of a toleration for it; it raises that, but sinks the great; as spangles adorn children, but expose men. Prince Henry, bespangled all over in his oylet-hole suit, with glittering pins, and an Achilles or an Almanzor in his Gothic array, are very much on a level, as to the majesty of the poet and the prince. Dryden had a great, but a general capacity; and as for a general genius, there is no such thing in nature: a genius implies the rays of the mind concentered, and determined to some particular point; when they are scattered widely, they act feebly, and strike not with sufficient force, to fire or dissolve the heart. As what comes from the writer's heart reaches ours; so what comes from his head, sets our brains at work, and our hearts at ease. It makes a circle of thoughtful critics, not of distressed patients; and a passive audience is what tragedy requires. Applause is not to be given, but extorted; and the silent lapse of a single tear, does the writer more honour, than the rattling thunder of a thousand hands. Applauding hands and dry eyes (which during Dryden's

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dramatic reign often met) are a satire on the writer's talent, and the spectator's taste. When by such judges the laurel is blindly given, and by such a poet proudly received, they resemble an intoxicated host, and his tasteless guests, over some sparkling adulteration, commending their champaign.

But Dryden has his glory, though not on the stage: what an inimitable original is his ode! A small one, indeed, but of the first lustre, and without a flaw; and, amid the brightest boasts of antiquity, it may find a foil.

Among the brightest of the moderns, Mr Addison must take his place. Who does not approach his character with great respect? They who refuse to close with the public in his praise, refuse at their peril: but, if men will be fond of their own opinions, some hazard must be run. He had, what Dryden and Johnson wanted, a warm, and feeling heart; but being of a grave and bashful nature, through a philosophic reserve, and a sort of moral prudery, he concealed it, where he should have let loose all his fire, and have showed the most tender sensibilities of heart. At his celebrated Cato, few tears are shed, but Cato's own; which, indeed, are truly great, but unassuming, except to the noble few who love their country better than themselves. The bulk of mankind want virtue enough to be touched by them. His strength of genius has reared up one glorious image, more lofty, and truly golden, than that in the plains of Dura, for cool admiration to gaze at, and warm patriotism (how rare!) to worship; while those two throbbing pulses of the drama, by which alone it is shown to live, Terror and Pity, neglected through the whole, leave our unmolested hearts at perfect peace. Thus the poet,

like his hero, through mistaken excellence, and virtue overstrained, becomes a sort of suicide: and that which is most dramatic in the drama, dies. All his charms of poetry are but as funeral flowers, which adorn; all his noble sentiments but as rich spices, which embalm the tragedy deceased.

Of tragedy, pathos is not only the life and soul, but the soul inextinguishable; it charms us through a thousand faults. Decorations, which in this author abound, though they might immortalize other poetry, are the *splendida peccata* which damn the drama; while, on the contrary, the murder of all other beauties is a venial sin, nor plucks the laurel from the tragedian's brow. Was it otherwise, Shakespear himself would run some hazard of losing his crown.

Socrates frequented the plays of Euripides; and, what living Socrates would decline the theatre, at the representation of Cato? Tully's assassins found him in his litter, reading the Medea of the Grecian poet, to prepare himself for death. Part of Cato might be read to the same end. In the weight and dignity of moral reflection, Addison resembles that poet, who was called the dramatic philosopher; and is himself, as he says of Cato, "ambitiously sententious." But as to the singular talent so remarkable in Euripides, at melting down hearts into the tender streams of grief and pity, there the resemblance fails. His beauties sparkle, but do not warm; they sparkle as stars in a frosty night. There is indeed a constellation in his play; there is the philosopher, patriot, orator, and poet; but where is the tragedian? and if that is wanting,

"Cur in theatrum Cato severe venisti?" *Mart.*

And when I recollect what passed between him and

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Dryden, in relation to this drama, I must add the next line,

"An ideo tantum veneras, ut exires?"

For, when Addison was a student at Oxford, he sent up his play to his friend Dryden, as a proper person to recommend it to the theatre, if it deserved it; who returned it with very great commendation; but with his opinion, that, on the stage, it could not meet with its deserved success. But though the performance was denied the theatre, it brought its author on the public stage of life. For persons in power enquiring soon after of the head of his college for a youth of parts, Addison was recommended, and readily received, by means of the great reputation which Dryden had just then spread of him above.

There is this similitude between the poet and the play; as this is more fit for the closet than the stage, so, that shone brighter in private conversation than on the public scene. They both had a sort of local excellency, as the heathen gods a local divinity; beyond such a bound they, unadmired; and these, unadored. This puts me in mind of Plato, who denied Homer to the public; that Homer which, when in his closet, was rarely out of his hand. Thus though Cato is not calculated to signalize himself in the warm emotions of the theatre, yet we find him a most amiable companion, in our calmer delights of recess.

Notwithstanding what has been offered, this, in many views, is an exquisite piece. But there is so much more of art than nature in it, that I can scarce forbear calling it an exquisite piece of statuary,

"Where the smooth chisel all its skill has shown,

"To soften into flesh the rugged stone." *Addison.*

That is, where art has taken great pains to labour undramatic matter into dramatic life; which is impossible. However, as it is, like Pigmalion, we cannot but fall in love with it, and wish it was alive. How would a Shakespear or an Otway have answered our wishes! they would have outdone Prometheus, and with their heavenly fire, have given him not only life, but immortality. At their dramas (such is the force of Nature) the poet is out of sight, quite hid behind his Venus, never thought of, till the curtain falls. Art brings our author forward; he stands before his piece, splendidly indeed, but unfortunately; for the writer must be forgotten by his audience during the representation, if for ages he would be remembered by posterity. In the theatre, as in life, delusion is the charm; and we are undelighted, the first moment we are undeceived. Such demonstration have we, that the theatre is not yet opened in which solid happiness can be found by man; because none are more than comparatively good; and folly has a corner in the heart of the wise.

A genius fond of ornament should not be wedded to the tragic muse, which is in mourning: we want not to be diverted at an entertainment, where our greatest pleasure arises from the depth of our concern. But whence (by the way) this odd generation of pleasure from pain? the movement of our melancholy passions is pleasant, when we ourselves are safe: we love to be at once, miserable, and unhurt: so are we made; and so made, perhaps, to show us the divine goodness; to show that none of our passions were designed to give us pain except when being pained is for our advantage on the whole; which is evident from this instance, in which we see, that

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passions the most painful administer greatly, sometimes, to our delight. Since great names have accounted otherwise for this particular, I wish this solution, though to me probable, may not prove a mistake.

To close our thoughts on Cato: he who sees not much beauty in it, has no taste for poetry; he who sees nothing else, has no taste for the stage. Whilst it justifies censure, it extorts applause. It is much to be admired, but little to be felt. Had it not been a tragedy, it had been immortal; as it is a tragedy, its uncommon fate somewhat resembles his, who, for conquering gloriously, was condemned to die. Both shone, but shone fatally; because in breach of their respective laws, the laws of the drama, and the laws of arms. But how rich in reputation must that author be, who can spare a Cato, without feeling the loss!

That loss by our author would scarce be felt: it would be but dropping a single feather from a wing that mounts him above his contemporaries. He has a more refined, decent, judicious, and extensive genius than Pope or Swift. To distinguish this triumvirate from each other, and, like Newton, to discover the different colours in these genuine and meridian rays of literary light, Swift is a singular wit, Pope a correct poet, Addison a great author. Swift looked on wit as the *jus divinum* to dominion and sway in the world; and considered as usurpation, all power that was lodged in persons of less sparkling understandings. This inclined him to tyranny in wit: Pope was somewhat of his opinion, but was for softening tyranny into lawful monarchy; yet were there some acts of severity in his reign. Ad-

difon's crown was elective, he reigned by the public voice :

" ————— Volentes

" Per populos dat jura, viamque affectat Olympo." *Virg.*

But as good books are the medicine of the mind, if we should dethrone these authors, and consider them not in their royal, but medicinal capacity, might it not then be said, that Addison prescribed a wholesome and pleasant regimen, which was universally relished, and did much good; that Pope preferred a purgative of satire, which though wholesome, was too painful in its operation; and that Swift insisted on a large doze of ipecacuanha, which though readily swallowed from the fame of the physician, yet, if the patient had any delicacy of taste, he threw up the remedy, instead of the disease.

Addison wrote little in verse; much in sweet, elegant, Virgilian prose; so let me call it, since Longinus calls Herodotus most Homeric, and Thucydides is said to have formed his style on Pindar. Addison's compositions are built with the finest materials in the taste of the ancients, and (to speak his own language) on truly classic ground; and though they are the delight of the present age, yet am I persuaded that they will receive more justice from posterity. I never read him but I am struck with such a disheartened idea of perfection, that I drop my pen. And, indeed, far superior writers should forget his compositions, if they would be greatly pleased with their own.

And yet (perhaps you have not observed it) what is the common language of the world, and even of his admirers, concerning him? they call him an

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elegant writer : that elegance which shines on the surface of his compositions, seems to dazzle their understanding, and render it a little blind to the depth of sentiment which lyes beneath : thus (hard fate !) he loses reputation with them, by doubling his title to it. On subjects the most interesting and important, no author of his age has written with greater, I had almost said, with equal weight : and they who commend him for his elegance, pay him such a sort of compliment by their abstemious praise, as they would pay to Lucretia, if they should commend her only for her beauty.

But you say, that you know his value already— You know, indeed, the value of his writings, and close with the world in thinking them immortal : but, I believe, you know not, that his name would have deserved immortality, though he had never written ; and that, by a better title than the pen can give. You know too, that his life was amiable ; but, perhaps you are still to learn, that his death was triumphant : that is a glory granted to very few. And the paternal hand of Providence, which sometimes snatches home its beloved children in a moment, must convince us, that it is a glory of no great consequence to the dying individual ; that when it is granted, it is granted chiefly for the sake of the surviving world, which may profit by his pious example, to whom is indulged the strength and opportunity to make his virtue shine out brightest at the point of death. And, here, permit me to take notice, that the world will, probably, profit more by a pious example of lay extraction, than by one born of the church ; the latter being usually taxed with an abatement of influence by the bulk of mankind : therefore to smother a bright example of this superior good in-

fluency, may be reputed a sort of murder, injurious to the living, and unjust to the dead.

Such an example have we in Addison; which, though hitherto suppressed, yet, when once known, is insuppressible, of a nature too rare, too striking to be forgotten. For after a long, and manly, but vain struggle with his distemper, he dismissed his physicians, and with them all hopes of life: but with his hopes of life he dismissed not his concern for the living; but sent for a youth nearly related, and finely accomplished, yet not above being the better for good impressions from a dying friend: he came; but life now glimmering in the socket, the dying friend was silent; after a decent and proper pause, the youth said, "Dear Sir! you sent for me. "I believe, and I hope, that you have some commands. I shall hold them most sacred." May distant ages not only hear, but feel the reply. Forcibly grasping the youth's hand, he softly said, "See in "what peace a Christian can die." He spoke with difficulty, and soon expired. Through grace divine, how great is man! Through divine mercy, how stingless death! Who would not thus expire?

What an inestimable legacy were those few dying words to the youth beloved! What a glorious supplement to his own valuable fragment on the truth of Christianity! What a full demonstration, that his fancy could not feign beyond what his virtue could reach! For when he would strike us most strongly with the grandeur of Roman magnanimity, his dying hero is ennobled with this sublime sentiment,

"While yet I live, let me not live in vain." *Cato.*

But how much more sublime is that sentiment



when realised in life; when dispelling the languors, and appeasing the pains of a last hour; and brightening with illustrious action the dark avenue, and all-sufficient confines of an eternity! When his soul faster animated his body, strong faith, and ardent charity, animated his soul into divine ambition of saving more than his own. It is for our honour and our advantage to hold him high in our esteem; for the better men are, the more they will admire him; and the more they admire him, the better will they be.

By undrawing the long-closed curtain of his death-bed, have I not showed you a stranger in him whom you knew so well? Is not this of your favourite author,

“—Nota major imago?”

Virg.

His compositions are but a noble preface; the grand work is his death: that is a work which is read in heaven: how has it joined the final approbation of angels to the previous applause of men! how gloriously has he opened a splendid path, through fame immortal, into eternal peace! How has he given religion to triumph amidst the ruins of his nature! and, stronger than death, risen higher in virtue, when breathing his last!

If all our men of genius had so breathed their last; if all our men of genius, like him, had been men of genius for eternals; then had we never been pained by the report of a latter-end—oh! how unlike to this! But a little to balance our pain, let us consider, that such reports as make us at once adore and tremble, are of use, when too many there are who must tremble before they will adore; and who convince us, to our shame, that the surest refuge

of our endangered virtue is in the fears and terrors of the disingenuous human heart.

"But reports, you say, may be false; and you farther ask me, If all reports were true, how came an anecdote of so much honour to human nature, as mine, to ly so long unknown? What inauspicious planet interposed to lay its lustre under so lasting and so surprizing an eclipse?"

The fact is indisputably true; nor are you to rely on me for the truth of it: my report is but a second edition: it was published before, though obscurely, and with a cloud before it. As clouds before the sun are often beautiful; so this of which I speak. How finely pathetic are those two lines, which this so solemn and affecting scene inspired!

"He taught us how to live; and, oh! too high

"A price for knowledge, taught us how to die."

Ticket.

With truth wrapped in darkness, so sung our oracle to the public, but explained himself to me: he was present at his patron's death, and that account of it here given he gave to me before his eyes were dry: by what means Addison taught us how "to die," the poet left to be made known by a late, and less able hand; but one more zealous for his patron's glory: zealous, and impotent, as the poor Egyptian, who gathered a few splinters of a broken boat, as a funeral pile for the great Pompey, studious of doing honour to so renowned a name: yet had not this poor plank (permit me, here, so to call this imperfect page) been thrown out, the chief article of his patron's glory would probably have been sunk for ever, and late ages have received but a fragment of his fame; a fragment glorious indeed, for his genius how bright! But to commend him for composi-

tion, though immortal, is detraction now; if there our encomium ends: let us look farther to that concluding scene, which spoke human nature not unrelated to the divine. To that let us pay the long and large arrear of our greatly posthumous applause.

This you will think a long digression; and justly, if that may be called a digression, which was my chief inducement for writing at all: I had long wished to deliver up to the public this sacred deposit which, by Providence, was lodged in my hands; and I entered on the present undertaking partly as an introduction to that which is more worthy to see the light; of which I gave an intimation in the beginning of my letter: for this is the monumental marble there mentioned, to which I promised to conduct you; this is the sepulchral lamp, the long hidden lustre of our accomplished countryman, who now rises, as from his tomb, to receive the regard so greatly due to the dignity of his death; a death to be distinguished by tears of joy; a death which angels beheld with delight.

And shall that which would have shone conspicuous amid the resplendent lights of Christianity's glorious morn, by these dark days, be dropped into oblivion? Dropped it is; and dropped by our sacred, august, and ample register of renown, which has entered in its marble-memoirs the dim splendor of far inferior worth: though so lavish of praise, and so talkative of the dead, yet is it silent on a subject which (if any) might have taught its unlettered stones to speak: if powers were not wanting, a monument, more durable than those of marble, should proudly rise in this ambitious page, to the new, and far nobler Addison, than that which you, and the public, have so long, and so much admired: nor this

nation only; for it is Europe's Addison as well as ours; though Europe knows not half his title to her esteem; being as yet unconscious that the dying Addison far outshines her Addison immortal. Would we resemble him? Let us not limit our ambition to the least illustrious part of his character: heads, indeed, are crowned on earth; but hearts only are crowned in heaven: a truth, which in such an age of authors, should not be forgotten.

It is piously to be hoped, that this narrative may have some effect, since all listen when a deathbed speaks, and regard the person departing as an actor of a part, which the great master of the drama has appointed us to perform to-morrow. This was a Roscius on the stage of life: his exit how great! Ye lovers of virtue, *plaudite!* and let us, my friend! ever "remember his end, as well as our own, that we may never do amiss." I am,

Dear Sir,

Your most obliged,

humble servant.

A N

E S S A Y

O N

L Y R I C P O E T R Y.

HOW imperfect soever my own composition * may be, yet am I willing to speak a word or two of the nature of Lyric Poetry; to shew that I have, at least, some idea of perfection in that kind of poem in which I am engaged; and that I do not think myself poet enough entirely to rely on inspiration for my success in it.

To our having, or not having this idea of perfection in the poem we undertake, is chiefly owing the merit or demerit of our performances, as also the modesty or vanity of our opinions concerning them. And in speaking of it, I shall shew how it unavoidably comes to pass, that bad poets, that is, poets in general, are esteemed, and really are the most vain, the most irritable, and most ridiculous set of men upon earth. But poetry, in its own nature, is certainly

“ —Non hoc quaesitum munus in usus.” *Virg.*

He that has an idea of perfection in the work he undertakes may fail in it; he that has not, must: and yet he will be vain. For every little degree of beauty, how short or improper soever, will be looked

* In former editions this Essay was placed before the lyric pieces.

on fondly by him; because it is all pure gain, and more than he promised to himself; and because he has no test or standard in his judgment, with which to chastise his opinion of it.

Now this idea of perfection is in poetry more refined, than in other kinds of writing; and because more refined, therefore more difficult; and because more difficult, therefore more rarely attained; and the non-attainment of it is (as I have said) the source of our vanity. Hence the poetic clan are more obnoxious to vanity than others. And from vanity consequentially flows that great sensibility of disrespect, that quick resentment, that tinder of the mind that kindles at every spark, and justly marks them out for the *genus irritabile* among mankind; and from this combustible temper, this serious anger for no very serious things, things looked on by most as foreign to the important points of life, as consequentially flows that inheritance of ridicule, which devolves on them from generation to generation. As soon as they become authors, they become like Ben Johnson's angry boy, and learn the art of quarrel.

“ —Concordes animae, dom nocte premuntur;

“ Hec I quantum inter se bellum. si lumina vitae

“ Attrigerint, quantae acies. stragemque ceibunt?

“ Qui juvenes! quantas ostentant, aspice, vires.

“ Ne, pueri! ne tanta animis assuescite bella.

“ Tuque prior, tu parve, genus qui ducis Olympo,

“ Sydereo flagrans clypeo, et coelestibus armis,

“ Projice tela manu, sanguis meus!

“ Nec te ullae facies, non terruit ipse Typhorus

“ Ardus, arma tenens; non te Messapus et Ufens,

“ Contemptorque deum Mæentia.”

Virg.

But to return. He that has this idea of perfection in the work he undertakes, however successful he is, will yet be modest; because to rise up to that idea which he proposed for his model, is almost, if not absolutely, impossible.

That two observations account for what may seem as strange as it is infallibly true; I mean, they shew us why good writers have the lowest, and bad writers the highest opinion of their own performances. They who have only a partial idea of this perfection, as their portion of ignorance or knowledge of it is greater or less, have proportionable degrees of modesty or conceit.

Nor (tho' natural good understanding makes a tolerably just judgment in things of this nature) will the reader judge the worse, for forming to himself a notion of what he ought to expect from the piece he has in hand, before he begins his perusal of it.

The ode, as it is the eldest kind of poetry, so it is more spirituous, and more remote from prose than any other, in sense, sound, expression, and conduct. Its thoughts should be uncommon, sublime, and moral; its numbers full, easy, and most harmonious; its expression pure, strong, and delicate, yet unaffected; and of a curious felicity beyond other poems: its conduct should be rapturous, somewhat abrupt and immethodical to a vulgar eye. That apparent order and connection, which gives form and life to some compositions, takes away the very soul of this. Fire, elevation, and select thought, are indispensable; an humble, tame, and vulgar ode is the most pitiful error a pen can commit.

"Musa dedit fid. bus divos, puerosque decorem."

And as its subjects are sublime, its writer's genius should be so too; otherwise it becomes the meanest thing in writing, viz. an involuntary burlesque.

It is the genuine character and true merit of the ode, a little to startle some apprehensions. Men of cold complexions are very apt to mistake a want of vigor in their imaginations, for a delicacy of taste in their judgments; and, like persons of tender sight,

they look on bright objects, in their natural light, as too glaring; what is most delightful to a stronger eye, is painful to them. Thus Pindar, who has as much logic at the bottom as Aristotle or Euclid, to some critics has appeared as mad; and must appear so to all, who enjoy no portion of his own divine spirit. Dwarf understandings, measuring others by their own standard, are apt to think they see a monster when they see a man.

And, indeed, it seems to be the amends which nature makes to those whom she has not blessed with an elevation of mind, to indulge them in the comfortable mistake, that all is wrong which falls not within the narrow limits of their own comprehensions and relish.

Judgment, indeed, that masculine power of the mind, in ode, as in all compositions, should bear the supreme sway; and a beautiful imagination, as its mistress, should be subdued to its dominion. Hence, and hence only, can proceed the fairest offspring of the human mind.

But then in ode, there is this difference from other kinds of poetry; that, there, the imagination, like a very beautiful mistress, is indulged in the appearance of domineering; though the judgment, like an artful lover, in reality carries its point; and the less it is suspected of it, it shews the more masterly conduct, and deserves the greater commendation.

It holds true in this province of writing, as in war, "The more danger, the more honour." It must be very enterprising; it must (in Shakespear's style), have hair-breadth 'scapes; and often tread the very brink of error: nor can it ever deserve the applause of the real judge, unless it renders itself obnoxious to the misapprehensions of the contrary.

Such is Casimir's strain among the moderns,

what lively wit and happy fire is an honour to them. And Buchanan might justly be much admired, if any thing more than the sweetness of his numbers, and the purity of his diction, was his own: his original, from which I have taken my motto, through all the disadvantages of a northern prose translation, is still admirable; and Cowley says, as preferable in beauty to Buchanan, as Judca is to Scotland.

Pindar, Anacreon, Sappho, and Horace, are the great masters of Lyric poetry among heathen writers. Pindar's muse, like Sacharissa, is a stately, imperious, and accomplished beauty; equally disdaining the use of art, and the fear of any rival; so intoxicating, that it was the highest commendation that could be given an ancient, that he was not afraid to taste of her charms:

"Pindarici fontes qui non expalluit haustus."

A danger which Horace declares he durst not run,

Anacreon's muse is like Amoret, most sweet, natural, and delicate, all over flowers, graces, and charms; inspiring complacency, not awe; and she seems to have good nature enough to admit a rival, which she cannot find.

Sappho's muse, like lady —, is passionately tender and glowing, like oil set on fire, she is soft and warm in excess. Sappho has left us a few fragments only; time has swallowed the rest; but that little which remains, like the remaining jewel of Cleopatra, after the other was dissolved at her banquet, may be esteemed (as was that jewel) a sufficient ornament for the goddess of beauty herself.

Horace's muse, (like one I shall not presume to name), is correct, solid, and moral; she joins all the sweetness and majesty, all the sense and the fire of the former, in the justest proportions and degrees;

su: cradding a felicity of drefs entirely her own. She moreover is distinguishable by this particularity, that she abounds in hidden graces, and secret charms, which none but the discerning can discover; nor are any capable of doing full justice in their opinion to her excellencies, without giving the world, at the same time, an incontestable proof of refinement in their own understandings.

But, after all, to the honour of our own country, I must add, that I think Mr Dryden's ode on St Cecilia's day, inferior to no composition of this kind. Its chief beauty consists in adapting the numbers most happily to the variety of the occasion; those by which he has chosen to express majesty, viz.

" Assume the god,

" Affects to nod,

" And seems to shake the spheres:"

are chosen in the following ode, because the subject of it is great.

For the more harmony, likewise, I chose the frequent return of rhyme, which laid me under great difficulties, but difficulties overcome, give grace and pleasure; and in account for the pleasure of rhyme in general (which the moderns are too fond), but from this truth.

But then the writer must take care that the difficulty is overcome; that is, he must make rhyme consistent with as perfect sense and expression as could be expected, if he was free from that shackle: otherwise, it gives neither grace to the work, nor pleasure to the reader, nor, consequently, reputation to the poet.

To sum the whole. Ode should be peculiar, but not strained; moral, but not flat; natural, but not obvious; delicate, but not affected; noble, but not ambitious; full, but not obscure; fiery, but not mad; thick, but not loaded in its numbers, which should

be most harmonious, without the least sacrifice of expression or of sense. Above all, in this, as in every work of genius, somewhat of an original spirit should be, at least, attempted; otherwise the poet, whose character disclaims mediocrity, makes a secondary praise his ultimate ambition; which has something of a contradiction in it. Originals only have true life; and differ as much from the best imitations, as men from the most animated pictures of them. Nor is what I say at all inconsistent with a due deference for the great standards of antiquity; nay, that very deference is an argument for it, for doubtless their example is on my side in this matter. And we should rather imitate their example in the general motives and fundamental methods of their working, than in their works themselves. This is a distinction I think not hitherto made, and a distinction of consequence. For the first may make us their equals; the second must pronounce us their inferiors, even in our utmost success. But the first of these prizes is not so readily taken by the Moderns, as valuables too massy for easy carriage are not so liable to the thief.

The Ancients had a particular regard to the choice of their subjects; which were generally national and great. My subject is in its own nature noble, most proper for an Englishman; never more proper than on this occasion: and (what is strange) hitherto unsung.

If I stand not absolutely condemned by my own rules; if I have hit the spirit of ode in general; if I cannot think with Mr Cowley, that "music alone, sometimes, makes an excellent ode,"

"Versus inopes rerum, nugaeque canorae;"

If there is any thought, enthusiasm, and picture, which are as the body, soul, and robe of poetry; in a word, if in any degree, I have provided rather food

for men, than air for wits; I hope smaller faults will meet indulgence, for the sake of the design, which is the glory of my country and my king.

And indeed, this may be said, in general, that great subjects are above being nice; that dignity and spirit ever suffer from scrupulous exactness; and that the minuter cares effeminate a composition. Great masters of poetry, painting, and statuary, in their nobler works, have even affected the contrary. And justly; for a truly masculine air partakes more of the negligent than of the neat, both in writings and in life.

“Grandis oratio haberet majestatis suae pondus.” *Pet.*

A poem, like a criminal, under too severe correction, may lose all its spirit, and expire. We know it was *faber imus*, that was such an artist at a hair, or a nail; and we know the cause was,

“Quia ponere totum

“Nescius.”

Hor.

To close, if a piece of this nature wants an apology, I must own, that those who have strength of mind sufficient profitably to devote the whole of their time to the severer studies, I despair of imitating, I can only envy and admire. The mind is relieved and strengthened by variety; and he that sometimes is sporting with his pen, is only taking the most effectual means of giving a general importance to it. This truth is clear from the knowledge of human nature and of history; from which I could cite very celebrated instances, did I not fear, that by citing them I should condemn myself, who am so little qualified to follow their example in its full extent.

END OF VOLUME FOURTH.



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